BOOK DESIGN◎TAKAHASHI JUNZI

竹光侍

His sword must be bamboo!

二

松本大洋
【作】永福一成

BIG SPIRITS COMICS SPECIAL

竹光侍
たけみつざむらい
二
松本大洋
【作】永福一成

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BCS1320

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BCS1320

勘吉、御輿大三朗、与左衛門、お勝…
瀬能宗一郎の笑顔が、人の輪を広げる。
國房、辻斬り、そして木久地真之介…
瀬能宗一郎の剣が、魔を呼び込む。

『[illegible]光伝』第一[illegible]

竹光侍 二

His sword must be bamboo!

TAKEMITSU ZAMURAI

ART BY
MATSUMOTO
TAIYOU
STORY BY
EIFUKU ISSEI

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【作】松本大洋
永福一成
【考証】保垣孝幸

BIG SPIRITS COMICS SPECIAL

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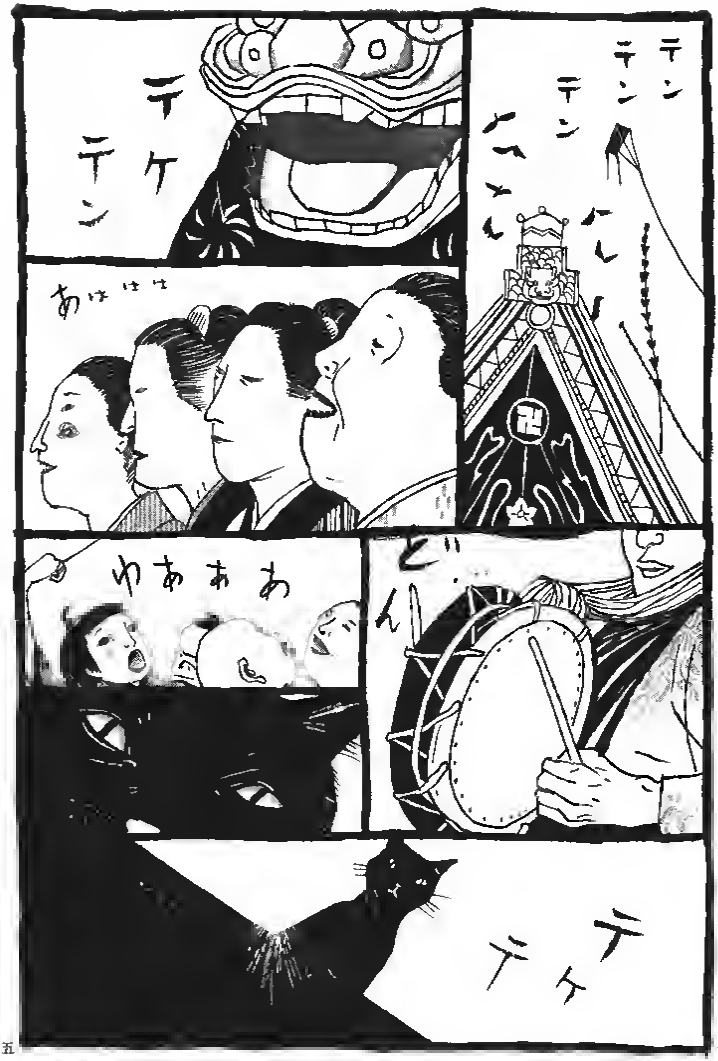
CHAPTER 11

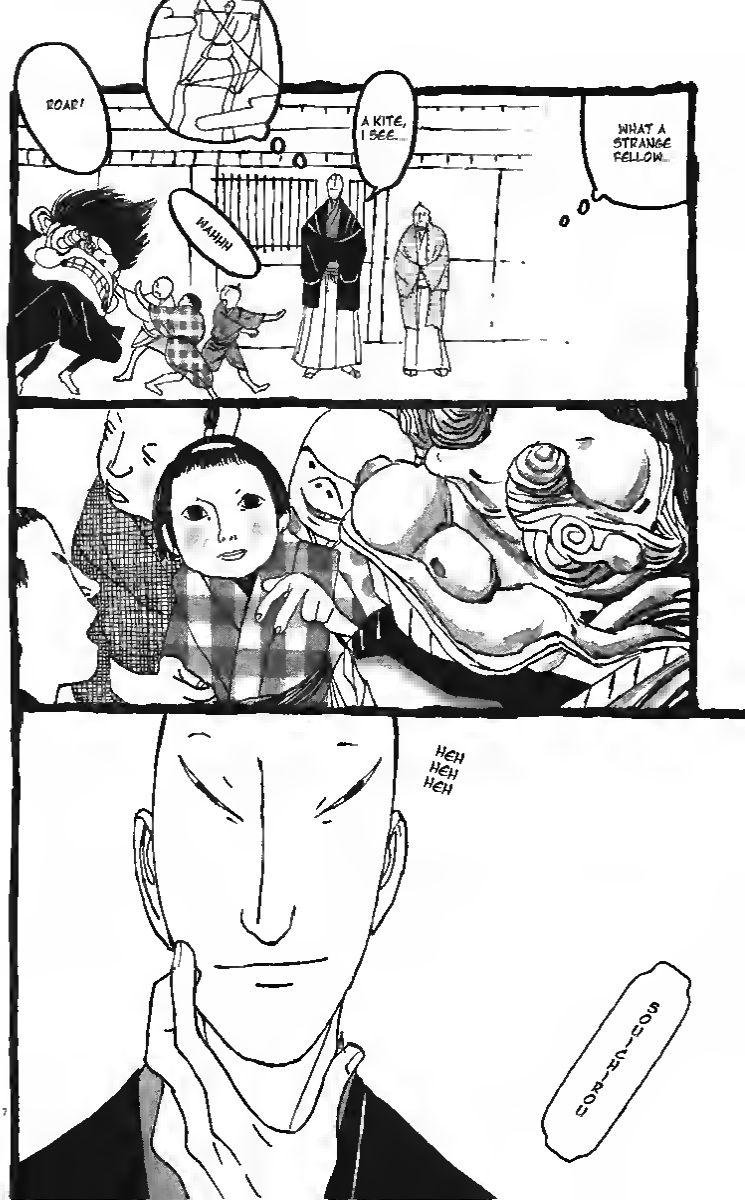
THE FIRST DREAM OF THE NEW YEAR


テン
テン
テン
テケ
テン
あはは
やあぁあ
テケ

KATAGI TENEMENTS
JANUARY 2ND

AH, THAT WOULD BE DELIGHTFUL MAAM
I SIMPLY MUST SHARE THE RICECAKE I RECEIVED FROM THE LANDLORD
PLEASE STOP BY OUR HOME AFTER, TEACHER.
ごはん
HI
おはよう
GOOD MORNING TEACHER
こんにちは
THE TEACHER'S A GLUTTON YOU KNOW
HE'LL STEAL ALL THE LEFTOVERS TOO, ORITSU!
ふふふ
HELLO THERE.
HMPH
HUMANS ARE SO NOISY IN THE EARLY MORNING

GOOD DAY TO YOU, MR LANDLORD MAY THIS BE A GOOD YEAR FOR YOU
SO YOU FINALLY WOKE UP? IF YOU SLEEP TOO MUCH, YOUR EYES WILL ROT AWAY, YOU KNOW.
ZOZEN-BOSE
OHHH, WHAT IS THAT?
IN ANY CASE, YOU SEEM TO BE GETTING ALONG WITH THE OTHER TENANTS WELL... HAHA..
THE FESTIVAL SEEMS LIKE IT'LL NEVER END
NEW YEAR'S IN EDO SURE IS LIVELY
WEREN'T THERE ANY IN YOUR HOMETOWN?
IT'S A TOY FOR CHILDREN
A K...KITE?
HMM? YOU MEAN THOSE KITES?
YOU FLY THE PAPER USING THE WIND


ROAR!
MAHHH
A KITE, I SEE...
WHAT A STRANGE FELLOW...
HEH HEH HEH
BOA-VA-BOA

THE MARKET DESTRICT
テン テン
ツ ツ
テン
HM HMM ♪
HM HMM ♪
HM HMM ♪
!
THE MOATS OF YOSHIHARA

ROWING ON A TREASURE BOAT,
OFF TO THE FIRST SALE OF THE YEAR WE GO,
HAKU
HAHA.. HE'S JUST LIKE A FRIENDLY GOD SPREADING GOOD WILL.
THREE FUTONS LYING DOWN WITH THE GODDESS KENTEN, DRESSED IN NIGHTGOWNS,
BUT HIS ATTENDANT GENJI SURE LOOS LOOKS UNCOM-FORTABLE
GENJI
PERHAPS THE TWO REALLY ARE IN LOVE.

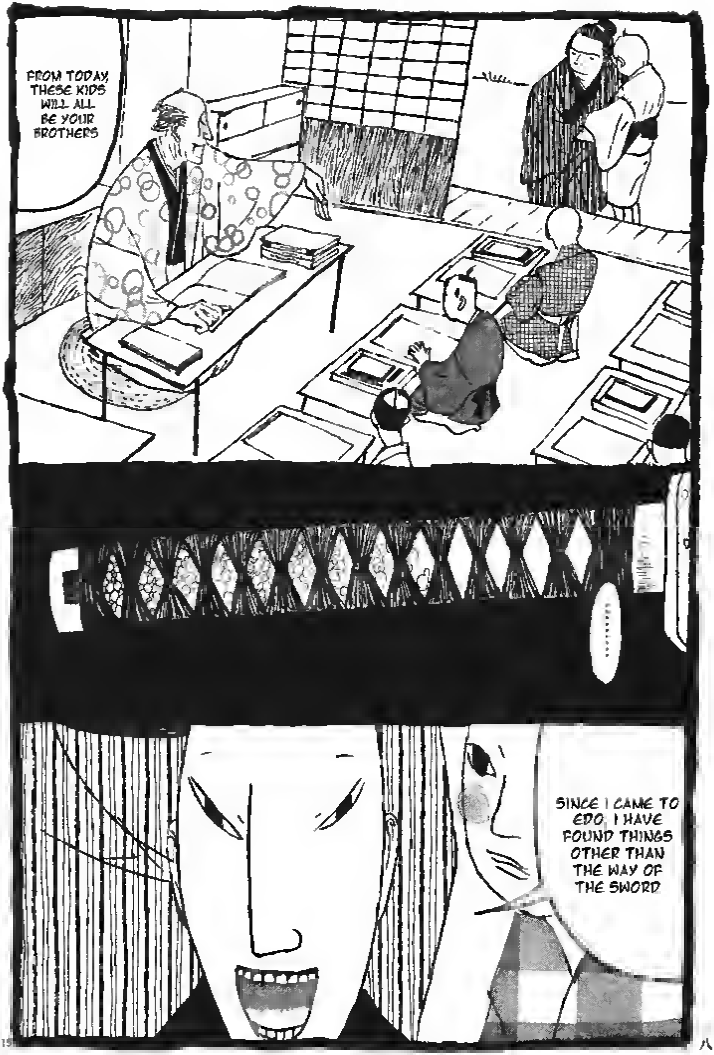
すまうまうまう
メコンセンセー
IT IS I, KUNIFUSA
THE SWORD THAT YOU SOLD AWAY
I HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN YOU
HAVE I BEEN FORGOTTEN?
I REMEMBER

BUT OUR EYES AREN'T MEETING AT ALL...
THAT IS BECAUSE I CAN ONLY SEE YOU VERY FAINTLY.
WHAT DO YOU CALL THIS NEW BAMBOO SWORD OF YOURS?
NOTH-ING.
THEN JUST WHY HAVE YOU NOT COME TO BUY ME BACK ALREADY? I AM ALWAYS WAITING FOR YOU...
IT IS BETTER FOR YOU TO FIND A MORE FITTING MASTER.
I NO LONGER NEED A BLADE.
AHAHA HAHA

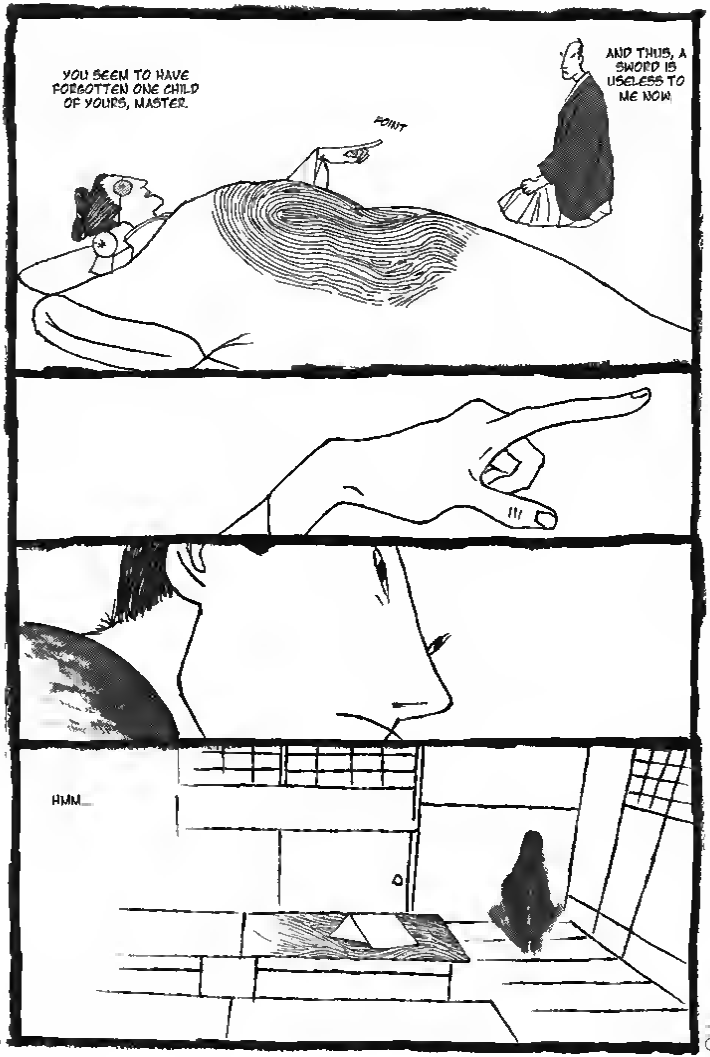
I AM CURRENTLY TEACHING CHILDREN HOW TO READ AND WRITE AS A LOCAL TUTOR
I CAN READ YOU BETTER THAN A BOOK
DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE YOU CAN LIVE WITHOUT ME?
MASTER HOGA EVEN COMPLIMENTED ME...
MR. KURA RELYS ON ME.
?
?
CHILDREN ARE ALMOST ALWAYS VERY UNIQUE FIGURING THEM OUT IS NOT AN EASY TAK
KIDS THAT LIKE WATER KIDS THAT LIKE TREES... THEY'RE ALL DIFFERENT IN THEIR OWN WAYS
I SEE. I SEE.

OH MY, OH MY.
OTHER THAN READING AND WRITING, I MUST ALSO TEACH THEM RULES OF ETIQUETTE.
HELLO, TEACHER!
THE INTELLI-GENT KANKICHI IS SURE TO BECOME A TALENTED CARPENTER
I AM WATCHING OVER ALL THEIR FUTURES!
NOW NOW...
SO NO NEED TO WAIT UP FOR ME!!
AFTER WORK, I'LL COME OVER TO LOOK ON YOUR LEAKY ROOF

GO GREET THE TEACHER
AND THOSE CHILDREN WILL ONE DAY HAVE CHILDREN OF THEIR OWN...
AND I'LL BECOME THEIR GODFA-THER
TEACHER, IT'S A BABY GIRL. LOOK HOW CUTE SHE IS
AND EVENTU-ALLY THE CHIL-DREN I ONCE TAUGHT WILL HAVE CHILDREN OF THEIR OWN...
NO NEED TO BE SHY, COME ON IN.


FROM TODAY, THESE KIDS WILL ALL BE YOUR BROTHERS
SINCE I CAME TO EDO, I HAVE FOUND THINGS OTHER THAN THE WAY OF THE SWORD

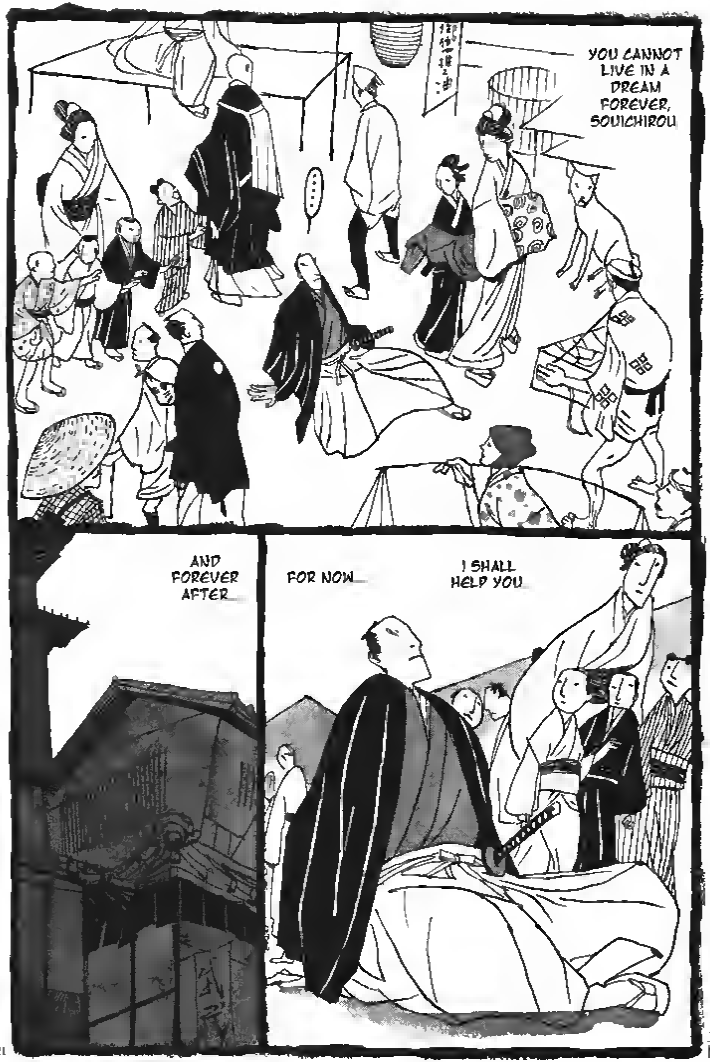
MY WISH TO MAKE MANY FRIENDS HAS COME TRUE
YOUR TALK HAS GONE ON RATHER LONG, HAS IT NOT?
I'M DONE NOW.
ZZZZZ


YOU SEEM TO HAVE FORGOTTEN ONE CHILD OF YOURS, MASTER.
POINT
AND THUS, A SWORD IS USELESS TO ME NOW.
HMM...

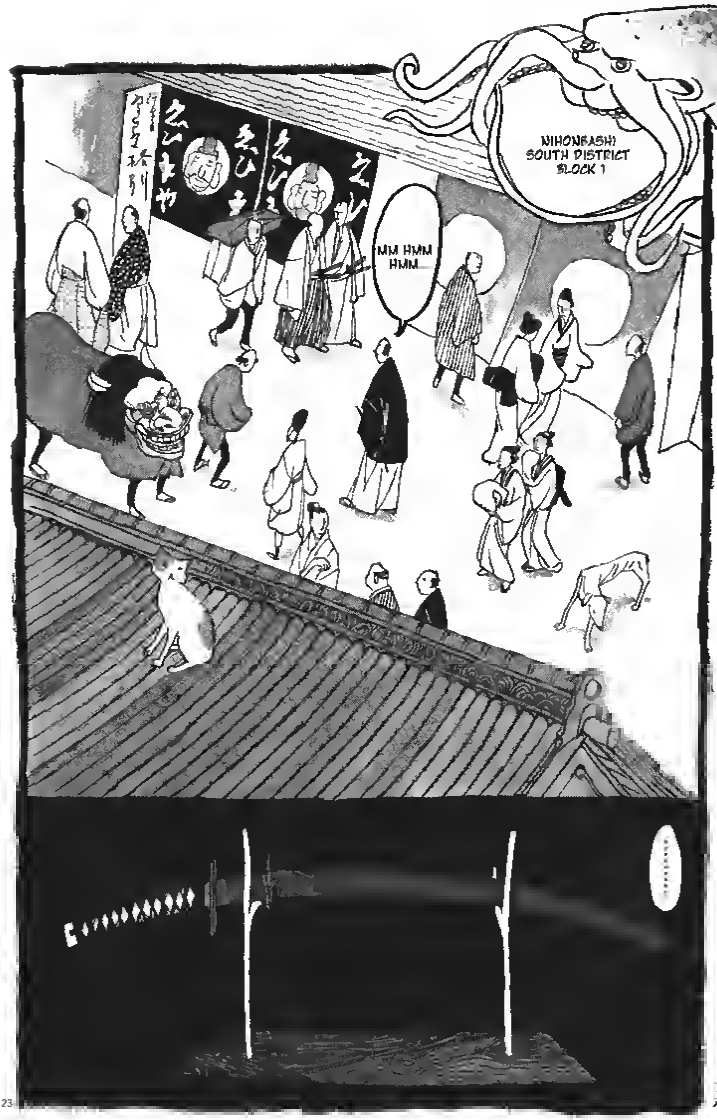
A CHILD YOU HAVE NOT GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO WITH YET...
GO ON AND TAKE A LOOK... AHAHAHA...
AH...

きゃっ

AGHHH!


YOU CANNOT LIVE IN A DREAM FOREVER, SOUICHIROU
AND FOREVER AFTER...
FOR NOW...
I SHALL HELP YOU

IT SEEMS LIKE THERE'S BEEN ANOTHER CORPSE FOUND AT OKAWA.
PAT
PAT
ISN'T THAT KAMEYAMA AND HIS SUBORDINATE?
IS IT RELATED TO THOSE OTHER TSUJIGIRI INCIDENTS?
TSUNEAORI!!
THAT MAKES IT THE 7TH CASE SINCE THE START OF THIS SUMMER
HUFF
HUFF
HMM HM HMMM
♫
I WONDER WHEN THE CRIMINAL WILL BE CAUGHT?
STEP



TRANSLATED BY HOX

CHEW
CHEW
YOU CAN GENERALLY TELL IF A PERSON IS GUILTY OR NOT BY LOOKING AT HIM.
CHEW
CHEW
IF YOU THREATEN THEM JUST A LITTLE, THE TIP OF THEIR NOSES BEGIN TO SWEAT.
THEIR EYES WANDER VOICES RISE, AND FINGERS SHAKE
CHEW
CHEW
CHEW
CHEW
IT IS NOT SOMETHING EASILY CONCEALED.
TEA
YES SIR

HOW PRETTY.
YOU'RE RIGHT
OHH, IT'S SNOWING.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRONAGE.
THAT WAS A DELICIOUS MEAL.
AHHHH

THERE ARE A LOT OF FOLKS IN THE WORLD WHO HAVE TERRIBLE SECRETS TO HIDE.
I'LL LEAVE THE MONEY HERE
CLINK
YOU CAN SNIFF THEM OUT ONCE YOU'VE WORKED IN THIS JOB FOR AS LONG AS I HAVE.
STEP
CLINK
AHH.
NO WONDER IT WAS GETTING A LOT COLDER THESE DAYS

CHAPTER 12
TSUNE'S SELF CONFIDENCE

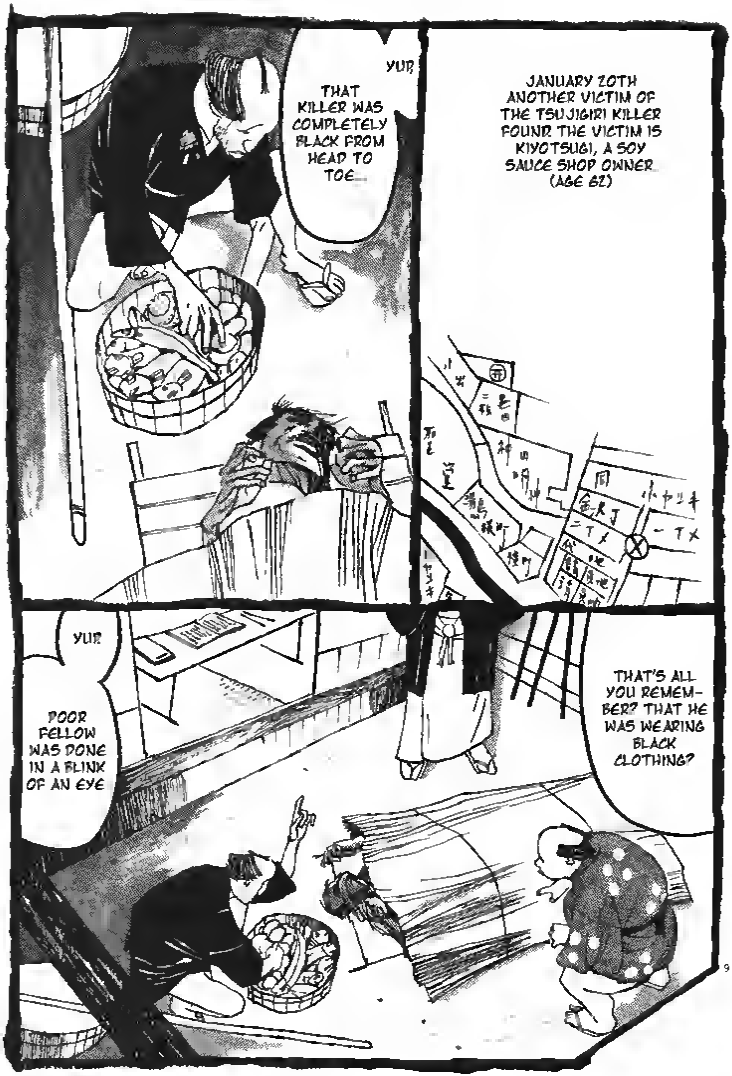
THE RONIN SENOU SOUICHIROU CAME TO LIVE IN THE KATAGI TENEMENTS AROUND 1 YEAR AGO.
HE SEEMS TO BE FROM SHINANO BUT MOST OF HIS PERSONAL HISTORY IS UNCLEAR.
JUST HOW DID HE EVEN OBTAIN A GUARANTOR AND THE NECESSARY CONTRACTS?
THE LANDLORD PROBABLY ASSISTED HIM WITH THAT.
HE SEEMS TO BE IN A GOOD MOOD FROM THE SNOW...
IT'S ALREADY BEEN 10 DAYS SINCE I STARTED TAILING HIM FOLLOWING MY SUSPICIONS OF WHETHER OR NOT HE WAS THE TSUJIGIRI KILLER.
PERHAPS IT REMINDS HIM OF HIS HOMETOWN?

I GET THE FEELING THAT THERE'S SOMETHING FUNNY ABOUT HIM
HE PAYS HIS RENT AND THERE'S NOTHING REALLY WRONG WITH HOW HE ACTS BUT THERE'S SOMETHING...
THERE ARE ASPECTS OF HIM THAT ARE VERY CHILD-LIKE.
BUT HIS REPUTATION IS GOOD AND HE'S WELL LOVED BY HIS NEIGHBOURS EVEN FROM THE CRANKY OLD HOUSEWIVES
THE KIDS THAT HE TEACHES ALL LIKE HIM TOO.
THERE'S NOT A SINGLE PERSON WHO SAYS ANY-THING BAD ABOUT HIM.

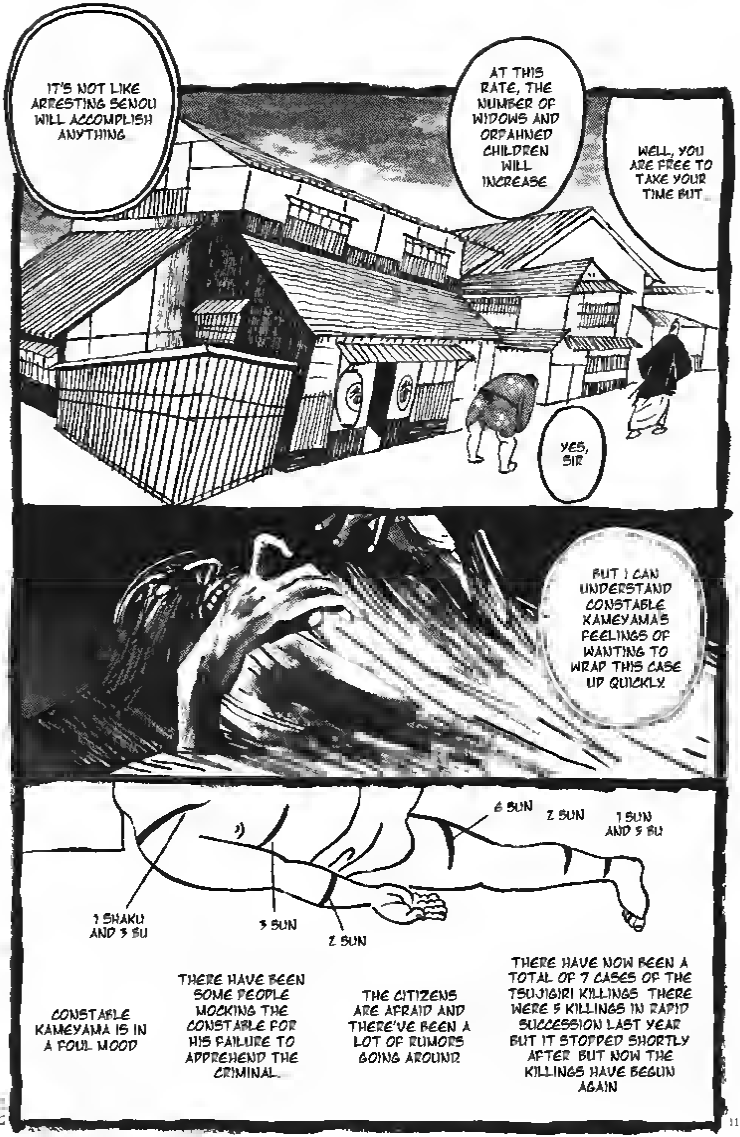
HAHA
I JUST CAN'T READ THIS GUY
AND WHAT'S MORE IS THAT HIS LANDLORD WAS MY BOSS
DO WHAT YOU WANT. I AIN'T GOING TO SAY ANYTHING
I LEARNED EVERYTHING THAT I NOW KNOW TODAY FROM HIM
HE'S NOT A MAN WHO WOULD COVER UP FOR HIS TENANTS JUST TO PREVENT HIS PLACE FROM GETTING A BAD REP...
AGH...
OW...
やあああ

.....
JANUARY 19TH
SNOWING SINCE EVENING
LIKED THE FOOD AT THE EARLIER RESTAURANT SO I STOPPED BY AGAIN.
BOWL OF RICE 12 MON*
SOUP 5 MON
STEAMED FISH 30 MON
SASHIMI 25 MON
STEW 30 MON

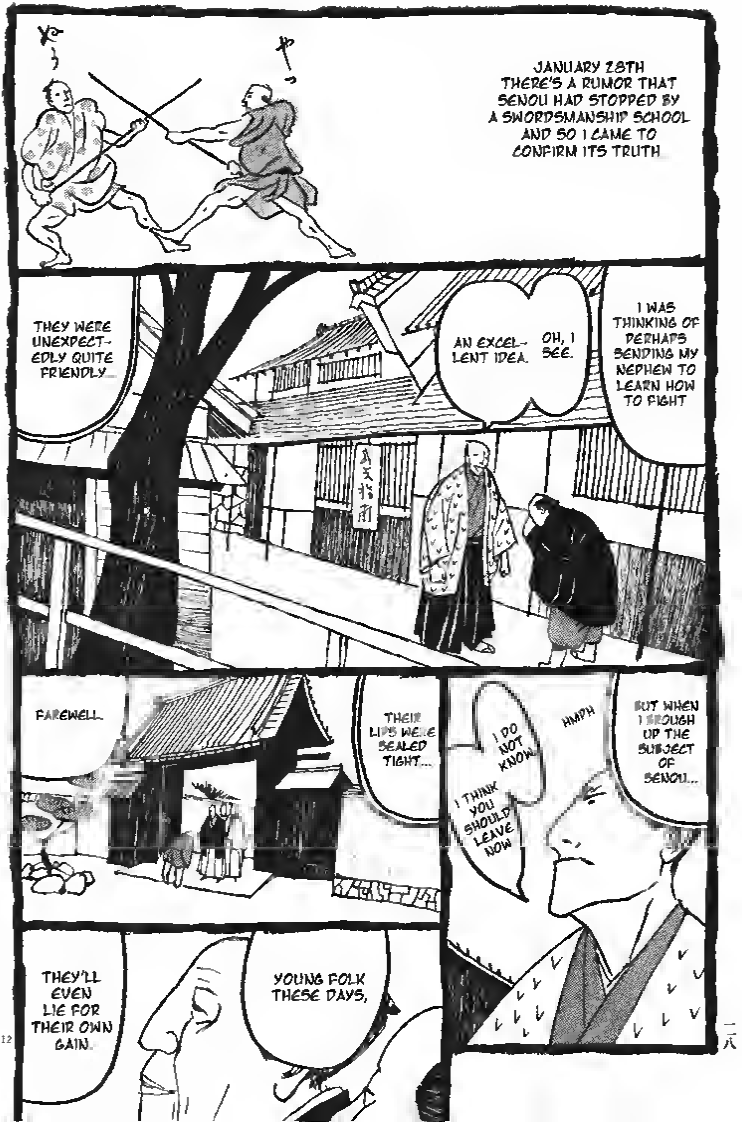
MON: CURRENCY OF EDO PERIOD JAPAN


YUR
THAT KILLER WAS COMPLETELY BLACK FROM HEAD TO TOE...
JANUARY 20TH ANOTHER VICTIM OF THE TSUJIGIRI KILLER FOUND. THE VICTIM IS KIYOTSUGI, A SOY SAUCE SHOP OWNER. (AGE 62)
YUR
POOR FELLOW WAS DONE IN A BLINK OF AN EYE
THAT'S ALL YOU REMEMBER? THAT HE WAS WEARING BLACK CLOTHING?

SORRY FOR TAKING UP YOUR PRECIOUS TIME, MR. KUMAHACHI.
AH, NO, NO
I APOLOGIZE FOR NOT BEING ABLE TO BE MORE OF A HELP
HEY, TSUNE
YES?
DIDN'T YOU SAY MENTION SOME SUSPICIOUS GUY BEFORE...? UMM... WAS IT SENDA SOMEGOROU?
SENOU SOUICHIROU, SIR
WELL, WHAT ABOUT HIM?
I HAVEN'T FOUND ANYTHING SUBSTANTIAL TO MAKE A REPORT YET.
I'LL NEED TO INVESTIGATE A BIT FURTHER.


IT'S NOT LIKE ARRESTING SENOU WILL ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING
AT THIS RATE, THE NUMBER OF WIDOWS AND ORPHANED CHILDREN WILL INCREASE
WELL, YOU ARE FREE TO TAKE YOUR TIME BUT...
YES, SIR
BUT I CAN UNDERSTAND CONSTABLE KAMEYAMA'S FEELINGS OF WANTING TO WRAP THIS CASE UP QUICKLY
6 SUN
2 SUN
1 SUN AND 5 BU
1 SHAKU AND 3 SU
3 SUN
2 SUN
CONSTABLE KAMEYAMA IS IN A FOUL MOOD
THERE HAVE BEEN SOME PEOPLE MOCKING THE CONSTABLE FOR HIS FAILURE TO APPREHEND THE CRIMINAL.
THE CITIZENS ARE AFRAID AND THERE'VE BEEN A LOT OF RUMORS GOING AROUND
THERE HAVE NOW BEEN A TOTAL OF 7 CASES OF THE TSUJIGIRI KILLINGS. THERE WERE 5 KILLINGS IN RAPID SUCCESSION LAST YEAR BUT IT STOPPED SHORTLY AFTER BUT NOW THE KILLINGS HAVE BEGUN AGAIN

JAPANESE UNITS OF LENGTH
SHAKU: APPROX. 30CM
SUN: APPROX. 3CM
BU: APPROX. 3MM


JANUARY 28TH
THERE'S A RUMOR THAT SENOU HAD STOPPED BY A SWORDSMANSHIP SCHOOL AND SO I CAME TO CONFIRM ITS TRUTH
I WAS THINKING OF PERHAPS SENDING MY NEPHEW TO LEARN HOW TO FIGHT
OH, I SEE.
AN EXCELLENT IDEA.
THEY WERE UNEXPECTEDLY QUITE FRIENDLY...
BUT WHEN I BROUGH UP THE SUBJECT OF SENOU...
HMPH
I DO NOT KNOW
I THINK YOU SHOULD LEAVE NOW
THEIR LIPS WERE SEALED TIGHT...
FAREWELL.
YOUNG FOLK THESE DAYS,
THEY'LL EVEN LIE FOR THEIR OWN GAIN.

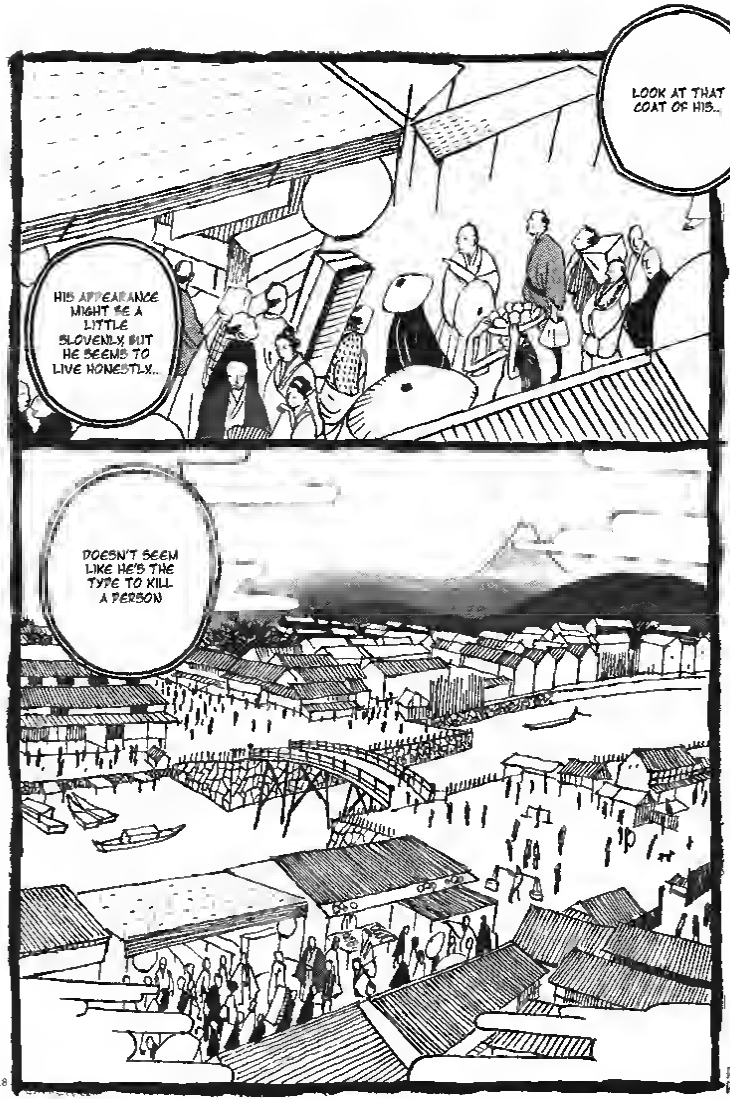
HMM.
GO BRING SOME SALT
IF YOU QUESTION AND INTERROGATE PEOPLE LONG AS I HAVE, IT'S EASY TO TELL WHEN PEOPLE ARE LYING.
COULD IT BE... THAT HE CHALLENGED AND DEFEATED THEM ALL?
IT DOES SEEM LIKE HE REALLY DID VISIT THIS SWORDSMANSHIP SCHOOL.
あぁぃぃ
とぅ
JUST HOW BADLY DID THEY LOSE?

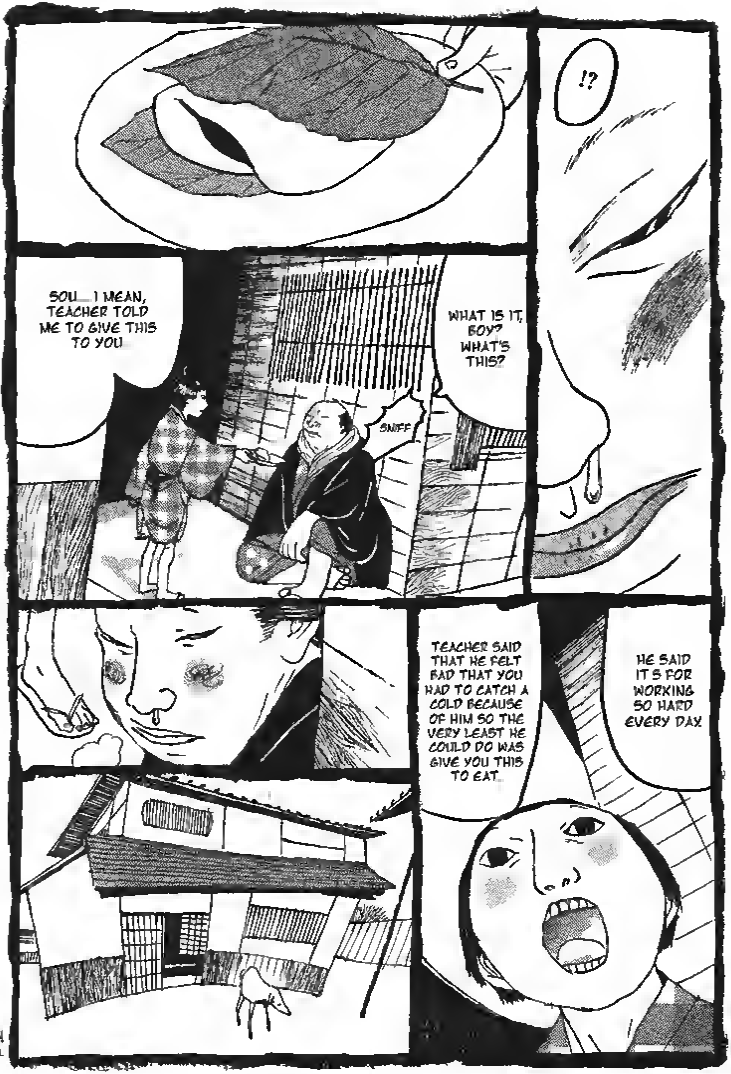
ん〜〜
AHH...
もみい
◎揚子
絹屋
塵紙
◎揚子

THOSE LIGHTS YOU SEE TWINKLING AMONG THE DARK NIGHT SKIES ARE FROM THE CROWS POKING HOLES IN THE PITCH BLACK CURTAINS THAT GOD HAS COVERED THE WORLD WITH.
LOOK, TSUNE-GOROU.
AA...
ACHOO!
HMM, IS THERE SOMEONE OUTSIDE?
HAHAHA, GIVEN HOW COLD THE NIGHT IS IT'S PROBABLY JUST A DOG SNEEZING

HA HA HA HA
HA HA HA
A DOG?
SNIFF
IT'S TAKING A TOLL ON MY BODY
FEBRUARY 2ND THE DAYS ARE VERY COLD
AA...
ACHOO!

ゆあおお
YOU CAN GENERALLY TELL IF A PERSON'S GUILTY BY LOOKING AT HIM
SWIPE
THE SLIGHT MOVEMENTS OF THE BODY GIVES IT AWAY.


LOOK AT THAT COAT OF HIS...
HIS APPEARANCE MIGHT BE A LITTLE SLOVENLY BUT HE SEEMS TO LIVE HONESTLY...
DOESN'T SEEM LIKE HE'S THE TYPE TO KILL A PERSON

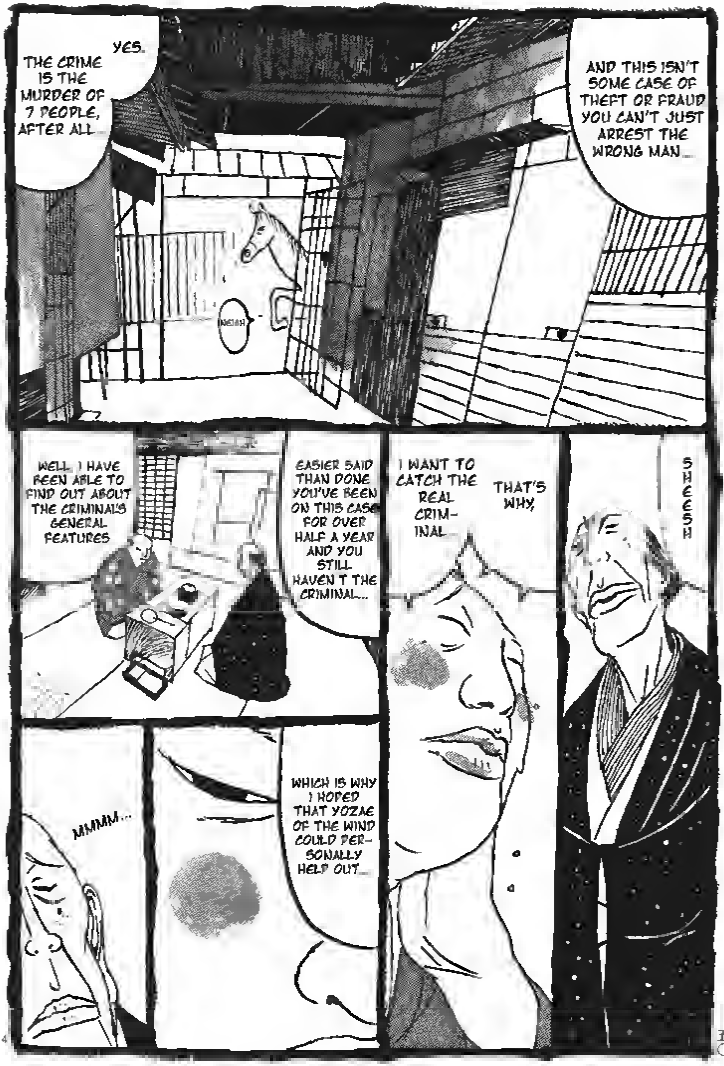

!?
WHAT IS IT, BOY? WHAT'S THIS?
SOU... I MEAN, TEACHER TOLD ME TO GIVE THIS TO YOU.
SNIFF
HE SAID IT'S FOR WORKING SO HARD EVERY DAY.
TEACHER SAID THAT HE FELT BAD THAT YOU HAD TO CATCH A COLD BECAUSE OF HIM SO THE VERY LEAST HE COULD DO WAS GIVE YOU THIS TO EAT.

PAT
ALRIGHT
I'LL BE GOING HOME NOW
GIVE HIM MY THANKS
FEBRUARY 4TH
MY INVESTIGATION INTO SENOU SOUICHIROU HAS ENDED AS OF TODAY
THE CRIMINAL MUST BE SOMEONE ELSE
-TSUNEGOROU-

*BUDDHIST CHANT
NAMU AMIDA BUTSU, NAMU AMIDA BUTSU*
CLANG
KAMITA NEIGHBOURHOODS
AHH.
MIDNIGHT

CHAPTER 13
THE TSUJIGIRI HUNT

YOZAEMON WAS DISCUSSING SOME MATTER WITH HIS FORMER SUBORDINATE, POLICE OFFICER TSUNEGOROU
AT THE KATAGI TENEMENTS,
AROUND 5 DAYS AGO
BUT MY BOSS DOESN'T SHARE THE SAME VIEW
I KNKOW THAT SENOU IS NOT THE CRIMINAL,
HMPH...
BUT KAMEYAMA SURE IS BEING PRETTY STUBBORN...
YES, QUITE RECENTLY
WERE YOU TAILING SENOU?
THE ONE WHO MENTIONED SENOU TO KAMEYAMA WAS NONE OTHER THAN TSUNEGOROU...
AND SO HE FELT GUILTY ABOUT CAUSING ALL THIS...


AND THIS ISN'T SOME CASE OF THEFT OR FRAUD YOU CAN'T JUST ARREST THE WRONG MAN...
YES. THE CRIME IS THE MURDER OF 7 PEOPLE, AFTER ALL...
SHEESH
I WANT TO CATCH THE REAL CRIM-INAL...
THAT'S WHY.
EASIER SAID THAN DONE YOU'VE BEEN ON THIS CASE FOR OVER HALF A YEAR AND YOU STILL HAVEN'T THE CRIMINAL...
WELL, I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE CRIMINAL'S GENERAL FEATURES
WHICH IS WHY I HOPED THAT YOZAE OF THE WIND COULD PER-SONALLY HELP OUT...
MMMM...

OH MY, OH MY, WHAT IS THAT!?
IS THE LANDLORD HOME?
WHY IS IT SO SMALL IN HERE? IS THIS SUPPOSED TO BE A HORSE STABLE!?
AH,
NO, NO, THAT IS SOME-ONE'S HOUSE
SO YOU ARE HOME RIGHT NOW.
?
THIS MAN IS OF THE UPPER VASSAL OF THE SHOG
IT IS I, WHO PROTECTS EDO WITH A SINGLE SPEAR, MIKOSHIDA-IZABUROU!!
NEIGH

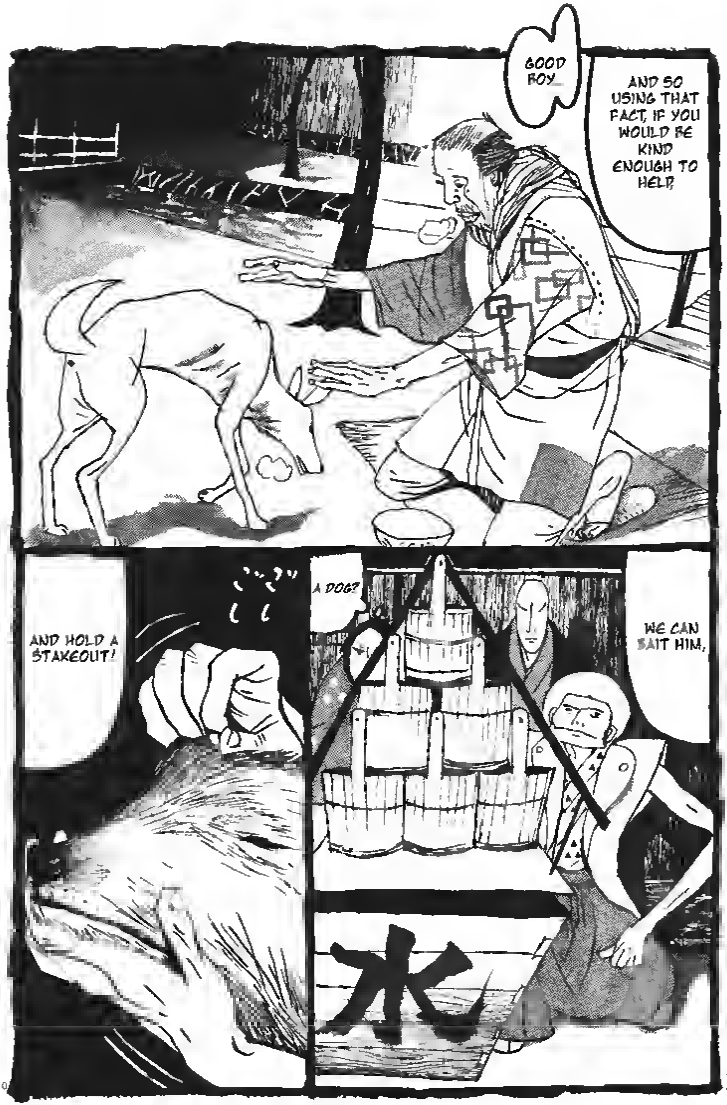
PRISON, I SEE, HUH...
HMM...
EXECUTION, HMM...
THE REAL CRIMINAL WILL BE CAUGHT SOONER OR LATER!
MR. YOZAE-MON!
WE MUST...
YES, AND SO TO PREVENT THAT,
HMM, MAYBE IN THE FIELDS OF KOZUKA...
IF THAT WERE TO HAPP-EN WHERE WOULD MY HEAD BE PLACED AT?
?

I SEE, THE FIELDS OF KOZUKA
I WONDER,
HOW IT FEELS TO HAVE ONE'S HEAD SEPARATED FROM THE BODY...
AH...
A BUTTERFLY
往用

ALL OF THE CASES HAVE OCCURED AROUND THIS CITY BLOCK OF KANDA.
THE VICTIMS HAVE BEEN WOMEN, CHILDREN, THE ELDERLY, FEEBLE, AND THE MENTALLY INSANE.
JUDGING FROM THE CUT MARKS LEFT ON HIS VICTIMS, IT IS THOUGHT THAT THE KILLER WIELDS A TACHI, UNLIKE A NORMAL HOODLUM'S DAGGER OR A YAKUZA'S NAGADOSU*
SO HE'S A WARRIOR?
YES.
MOST LIKELY.
2 MONTHS PASSED BETWEEN THE MURDERS OF THE STREETWALKER MOTHER AND CHILD AND THE MURDER ON NEW YEAR'S DAY AFTER THAT, ONLY 1 MONTH PASSED UNTIL HIS NEXT MURDER, IN WHICH HE KILLED A SOYSAUCE SHOP OWNER. AND NOW ONLY 15 DAYS PASSED BETWEEN THAT AND HIS MOST RECENT MURDER.

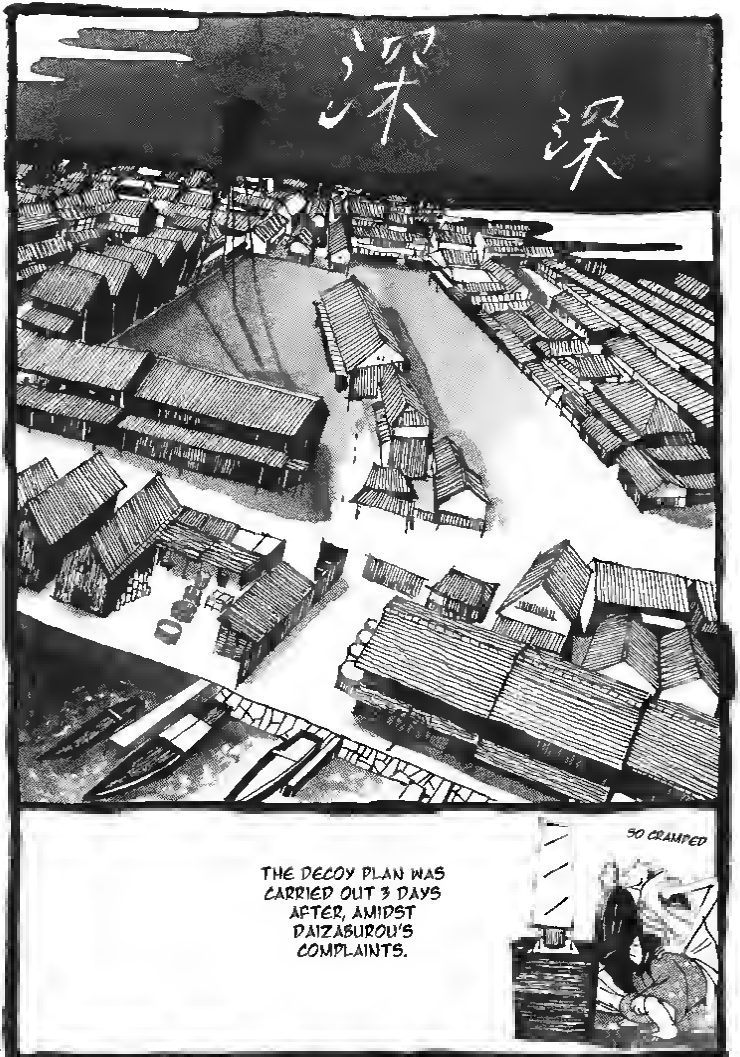
*TACHI AND NAGADOSU ARE BOTH TYPES OF JAPANESE SWORDS

AND SO THE NEXT TIME HE'LL STRIKE AGAIN IS HALF OF THAT... IN OTHER WORDS, WITHIN 7 OR 8 DAYS...
PANT
PANT
PANT
IT'S ALREADY BEEN 3 DAYS SINCE THE LAST CASE AND I'M CERTAIN HIS WILD URGES ARE EATING HIM UP FROM INSIDE
LAP
LAP
HE PROBABLY TRIES NOT TO MOVE SO METHODICALLY BUT I BELIEVE THAT HIS BLOODLUST HAS AWAKENED LIKE A SICKNESS. IT IS GROWING HARDER AND HARDER FOR HIM TO SUPPRESS HIS URGE TO KILL...
LAP
LAP
DOES THE KILLER REALLY STRIKE SO PUNCTUALLY LIKE THAT?
HE WILL APPEAR.
MOST DEFINITELY.


GOOD BOY...
AND SO USING THAT FACT, IF YOU WOULD BE KIND ENOUGH TO HELP
A DOG?
WE CAN BAIT HIM,
AND HOLD A STAKEOUT!
水

HAHA,
SUCH THINGS DON'T WORK OUT THAT EASILY IN REAL LIFE!
NO, SIR MIKOSHI.
BUT AT THE VERY LEAST, I CANNOT SAY THAT THIS IS MERE GUESSWORK.
HM
I'LL AGREE TO HELP MY FORMER SUBORDINATE WITH HIS PLAN.
BOSS...
HMM, I SEE.
HAHAHA
?

NOW, NOW. BEING SO LOUD WILL STARTLE THE HORSE.
AHAHAHA!!
HM
.....
ONE AT A TIME, ONE AT A TIME

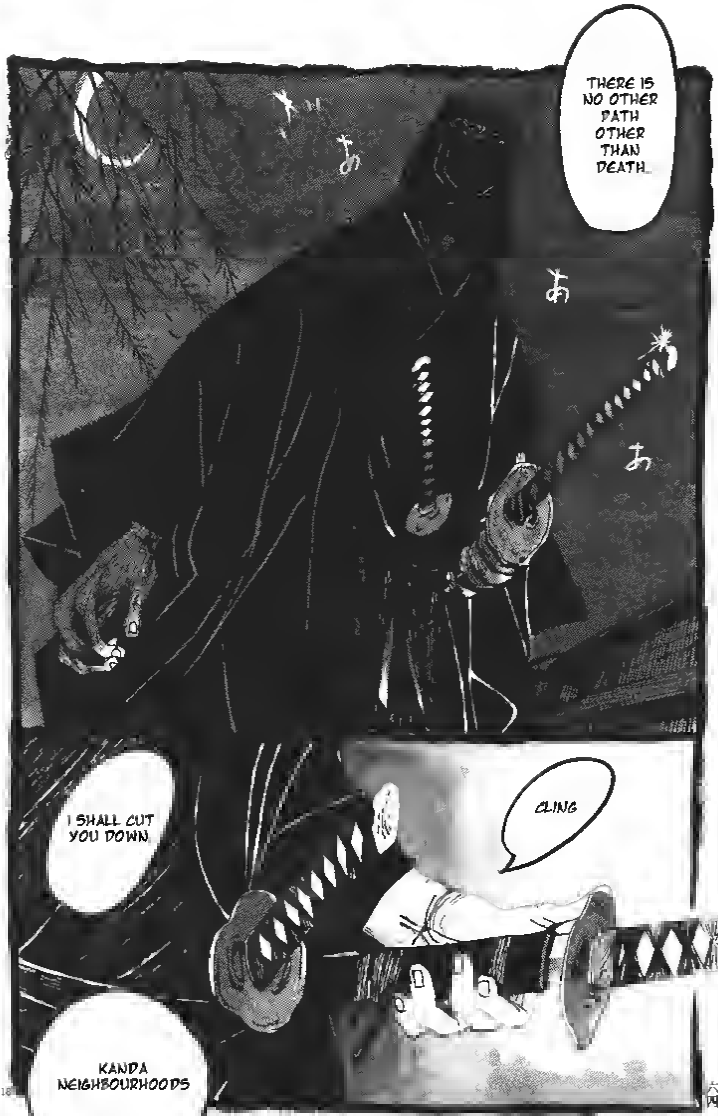

深 深
THE DECOY PLAN WAS CARRIED OUT 3 DAYS AFTER, AMIDST DAIZABUROU'S COMPLAINTS.
SO CRAMPED

HE'S BEEN DOING THIS FOR SEVERAL DAYS NOW...
BUT THAT OLD MAN SURE IS BRAVE, DOING ALL THIS FOR THE SAKE OF HIS TENANT.
IF THERE HAPPENS TO BE MORE THAN ONE KILLER, HE MIGHT END UP LOSING HIS LIFE, YOU KNOW?
.....
I'M AWAKE
HEY, I THINK SENOU IS SLEEPING.

HE IS THE MAN ONCE FORMERLY CALLED "YOZAE OF THE WIND"
HM?
HE WILL NOT BE KILLED SO EASILY
NO MATTER IF THERE ARE 5 OR EVEN 10 KILLERS, HE WILL NOT BE CUT DOWN.
HE WAS BOTH FEARED AND ADMIRED BY
THAT'S BECAUSE HE IS SO VERY QUICK
AS FAST AS THE WIND

HE WAS ALWAYS LEAVING ME IN THE DUST BEHIND
AND YET I STILL TRIED WITH ALL MY MIGHT TO KEEP UP WITH HIM...
FOLLOWING HIM ALWAYS...

LOOK, SENOU HE'S CRYING AGAIN
HEE HEE.
!
EVEN THOUGH OTHER DETECTIVES OFTEN ACCEPTED BRIBES AND EXTORTED MONEY, THAT MAN NEVER
AGAINST THE HEIGHT OF EVIL.
ずっ。
WNGH...



TRANSLATED BY HOX

KANDA NEIGHBOUR-HOODS
MIDNIGHT
UNSHEATHE
DIE.

CHAPTER 14
TSUJIGIRI CONCLUSION

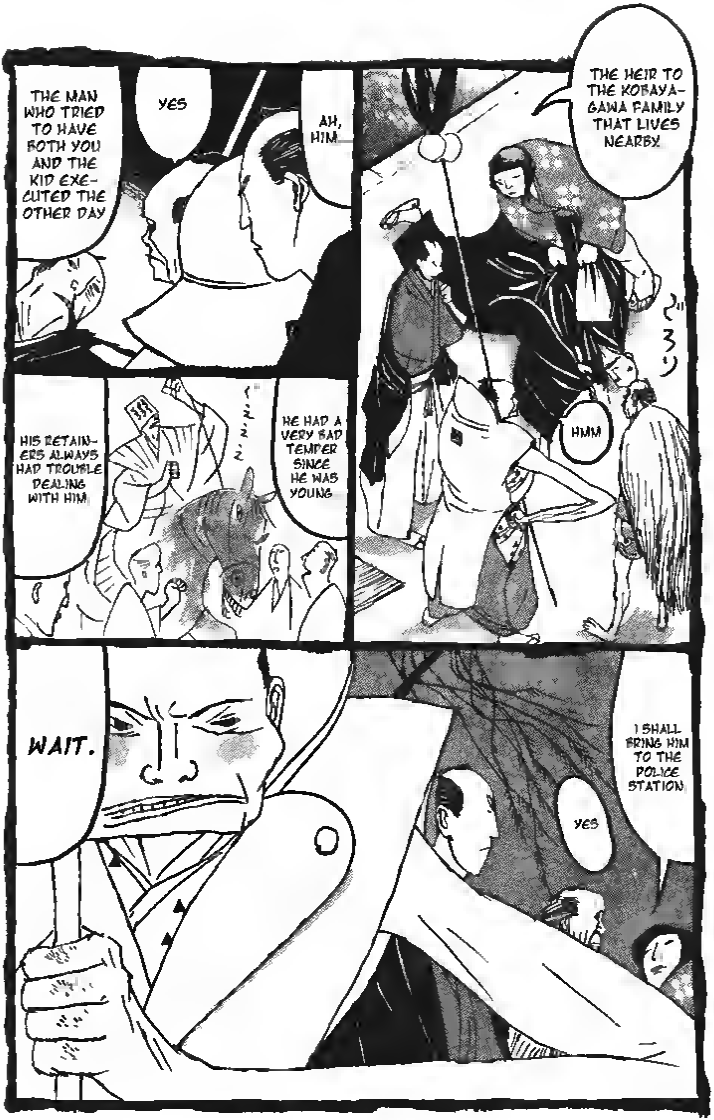
AGH
BAH!
DON'T DODGE IT!!
DIE!!
AH!
BOSS!

WHA!?
WHO ARE YOU!?
GYAHHHHHHH
HAH!

!?
SWISH
AH!
ばっ
GRIP
NNMM

STAB
OH!
HE KILLED HIM.
DASH

!?
WHAT?
HMPH
JUST A DOG...
BARK
BARK! BARK!
SLIDE
AH!
THIS MAN IS...


THE HEIR TO THE KOBAYAGAWA FAMILY THAT LIVES NEARBY
HMM
AH, HIM
YES
THE MAN WHO TRIED TO HAVE BOTH YOU AND THE KID EXECUTED THE OTHER DAY
HE HAD A VERY BAD TEMPER SINCE HE WAS YOUNG
HIS RETAINERS ALWAYS HAD TROUBLE DEALING WITH HIM
I SHALL BRING HIM TO THE POLICE STATION
YES
WAIT.

PLEASE.
COULD YOU PERHAPS LEAVE THIS MATTER TO ME TO BE DEALT WITH?
.....
WHAT IS YOUR INTENTION?
.....
TAKE HIS HEAD.
HMM, I SHALL...
.....
ALRIGHT THEN.

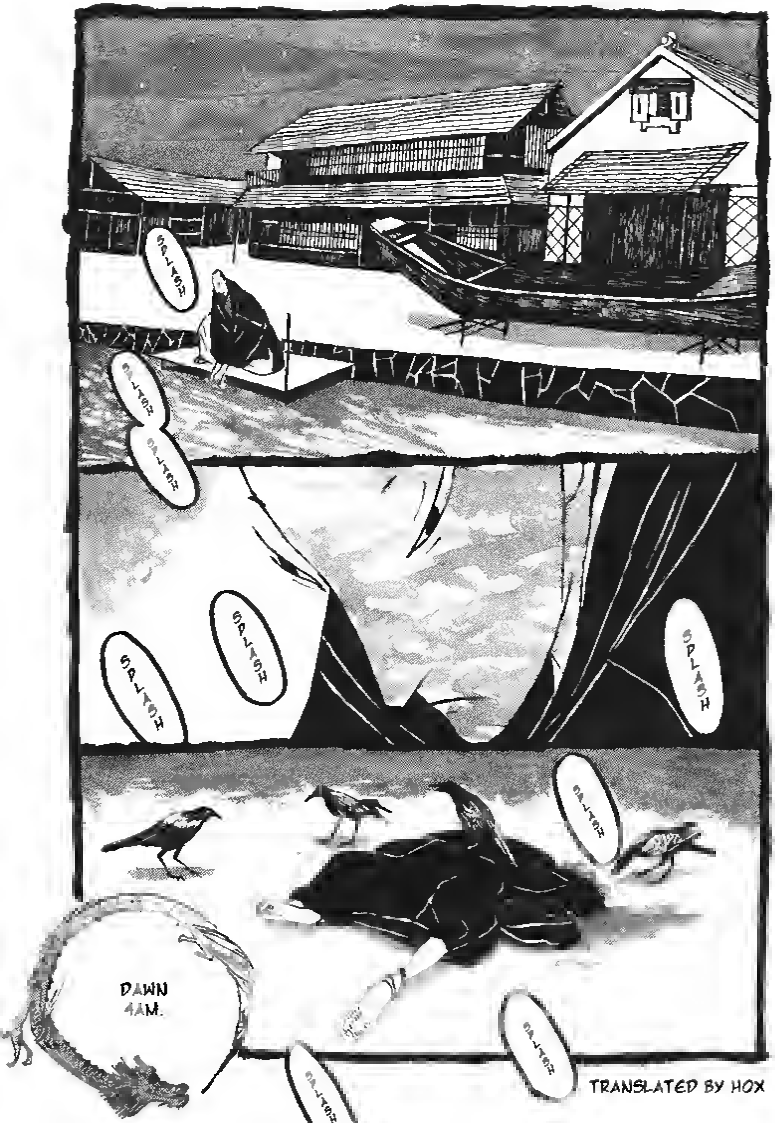
SWING
NEON
GRIN
STAND BACK.
CHOP
STEP

お

HAH...
I ASSUME THAT HE WILL DELIVER THE HEAD AND THE SWORDS TO THE KOBAYAGAWA RESIDENCE
WHY DID YOU LET HIM CHOP OFF THE HEAD BOSS?
LOOKING AT HIM, I WONDER IF HE SUSPECTED KOBAYAGAWA ALL ALONG...
AND SO THE FACE OF THE REST OF THE MEMBERS OF THAT KOBAYAGAWA FAMILY AND THEIR RETAINERS WILL BE SAVED
BY DOING THIS, HE'LL PREVENT THIS INCIDENT FROM BEING KNOWN PUBLICALLY
I SEE.
THUD
MM...

JUST WHAT IS INSIDE THIS CLOTH BAG?
THIS IS RATHER HEAVY, MASTER
NUHAHA, YOU'D BETTER NOT ASK, GENJI.
?
IF YOU KNEW, YOU WOULD ONLY END UP FAINTING.
BACK THEN, I WAS ACTUALLY FROZEN IN FEAR... HAHAHA, I GUESS YOU CAN'T BEAT OUT OLD AGE IN THE END...
THAT SAMURAI SAVED MY LIFE
HMM... I SOMEHOW FEEL LIKE I WAS STRUNG ALONG BY THAT MAN.
HMM?
TRITT

WHAT, YOU WERE STILL HERE BOY?
GOOD BOY.
ARF
ARF
HMPH.
THAT HE'S HAPPY TO BE ALIVE
HAHA
THIS DOG IS SAYING THE SAME THING TOO
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH


SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
DAWN
4AM.
TRANSLATED BY HOX

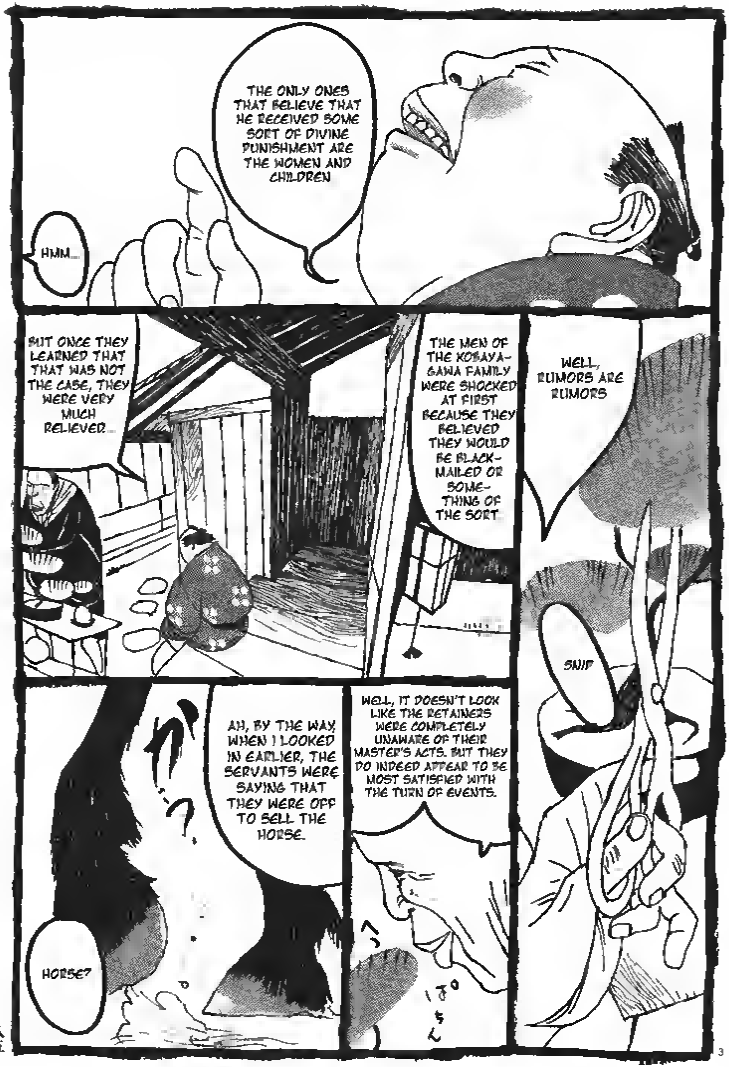
THE DEMON COMES

THIS WAS THE NEW STRANGE RUMOR CIRCULATING ALL OVER THE TOWN.

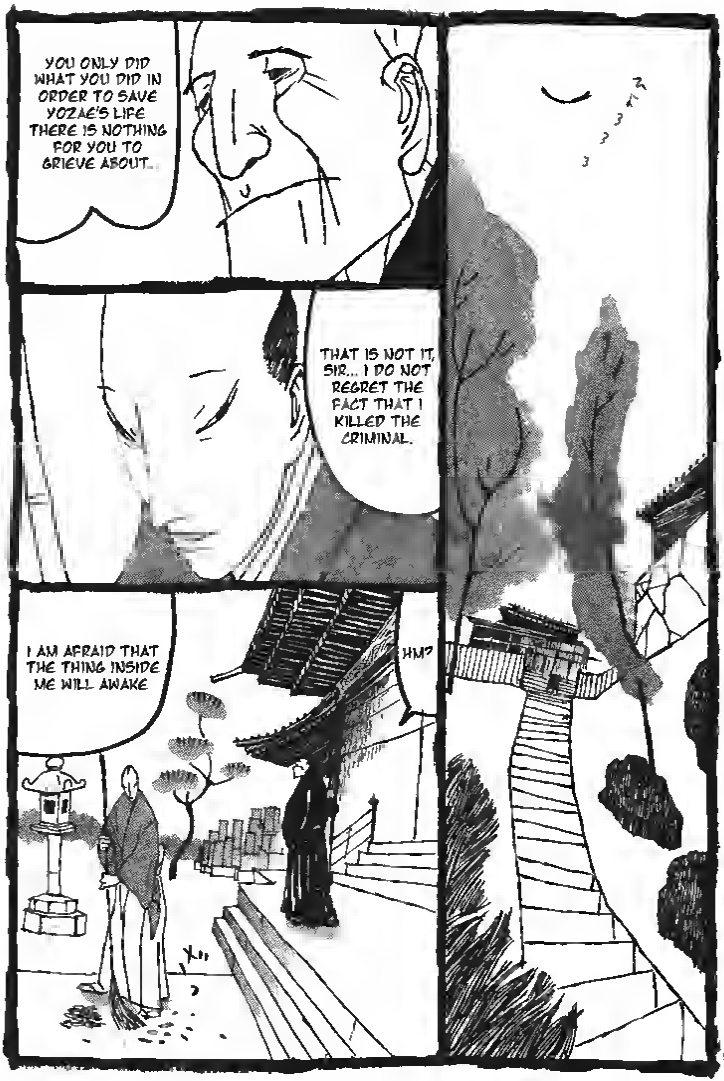
IT WAS THEN, WHEN THE LATE 8TH SHOGUN YOSHIMUNE, RESIDING IN HEAVEN, HAD DECIDED THAT HE COULD NO LONGER LEAVE THIS MATTER TO THE TOWNSPEOPLE ALONE AND TOOK ACTION HIMSELF. HIS SPIRIT DESCENDED UPON THIS EARTHLY REALM AND WITH A SINGLE BLOW, HE CUT OFF THE TSUJIGIRI KILLER'S HEAD. HE THEN TOOK THE DECAPITATED HEAD WITH HIM, LEAVING THE PITIFUL HEADLESS CORPSE BEHIND.

THOUGH THE COMMON FOLK MIGHT BE CLUELESS, THE HEAVENS WOULD NOT OVERLOOK SUCH HEINOUS CRIMES. THE INFAMOUS TSUJIGIRI KILLER THAT HAD BEEN PROWLING IN THE NIGHT WAS ONCE AGAIN LOOKING FOR HIS NEXT VICTIM THE OTHER NIGHT.

THE ONE WHO REALLY KILLED THE MURDERER WAS THE FOX RONIN THAT LIVES IN THERE.
HMPH,
THE GHOST OF YOSHI-MUNE SURE IS SCARY.
STEP
I CAN STILL SMELL THE STENCH OF BLOOD FROM HIM
I SAW THEM LOPPING OFF HIS HEAD
WELL... IT SEEMS THAT THEY HAVE RESOLVED THE ISSUE BY SAYING THAT HE DIED DUE TO SOME
MEOW
SNIP


HMM...
THE ONLY ONES THAT BELIEVE THAT HE RECEIVED SOME SORT OF DIVINE PUNISHMENT ARE THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN
WELL, RUMORS ARE RUMORS
THE MEN OF THE KOBAYA-GAWA FAMILY WERE SHOCKED AT FIRST BECAUSE THEY BELIEVED THEY WOULD BE BLACK-MAILED OR SOME-THING OF THE SORT
BUT ONCE THEY LEARNED THAT THAT WAS NOT THE CASE, THEY WERE VERY MUCH RELIEVED...
SWIP
WELL, IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THE RETAINERS WERE COMPLETELY UNAWARE OF THEIR MASTER'S ACTS. BUT THEY DO INDEED APPEAR TO BE MOST SATISFIED WITH THE TURN OF EVENTS.
AH, BY THE WAY, WHEN I LOOKED IN EARLIER, THE SERVANTS WERE SAYING THAT THEY WERE OFF TO SELL THE HORSE.
HORSE?

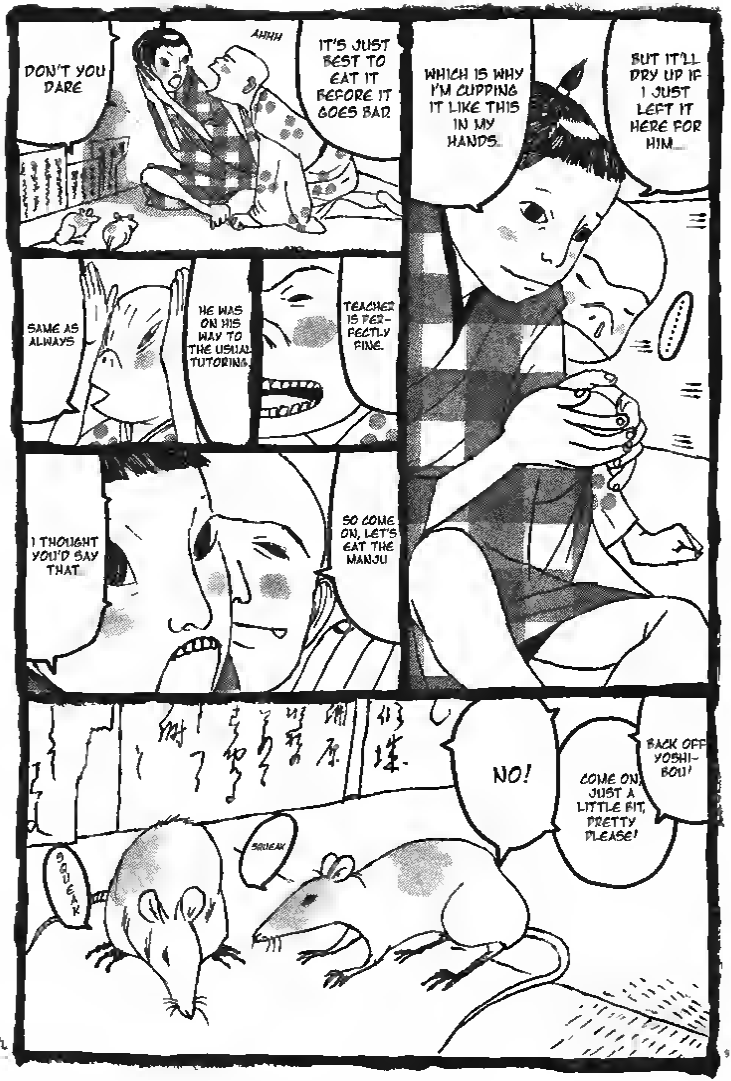
WELL, IT COULD BE JUST THEM PUTTING UP A FALSE FRONT, FEARING THE RUMORS GOING AROUND AMONG THE PEOPLE
NEIGH
YES, THE BLACK STALLION THAT THE YOUNG MASTER LOVED SOME OF THE SERVANTS WERE FEARING THAT IT WAS CURSED...
THE BOSS SURE HAS AGED.
HA HA HA
HMM... ALL THIS FUSS OVER A SINGLE HORSE...
CREAK
ZIO

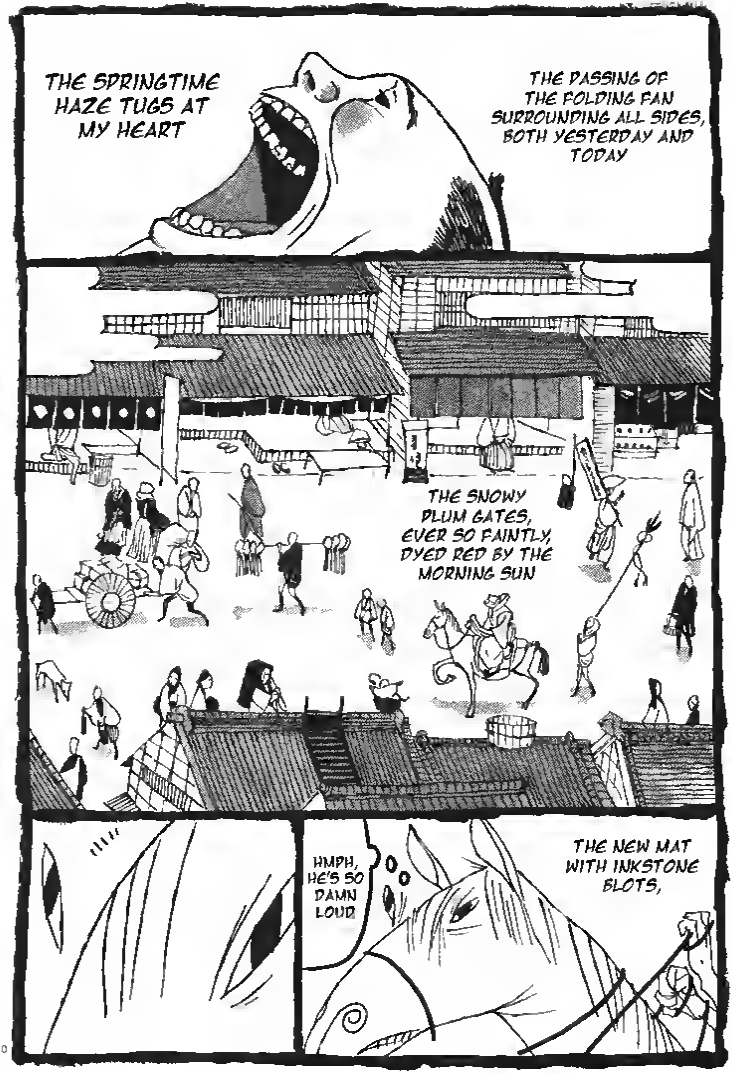

YOU ONLY DID WHAT YOU DID IN ORDER TO SAVE YOZAE'S LIFE THERE IS NOTHING FOR YOU TO GRIEVE ABOUT..
THAT IS NOT IT, SIR... I DO NOT REGRET THE FACT THAT I KILLED THE CRIMINAL.
I AM AFRAID THAT THE THING INSIDE ME WILL AWAKE
HM?

CACKLE
CACKLE
CACKLE
IT IS DEEP INSIDE ME AT ALL TIMES,
LYING IN WAIT FOR A CHANCE TO CREEP OUT.
SO SLEEPY

AND NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I WASH MY HANDS THE STENCH OF BLOOD WILL NOT GO AWAY
I AM WORRIED THAT THE CHILDREN MIGHT NOTICE
あ
あ
あ
I'M GOING HOME

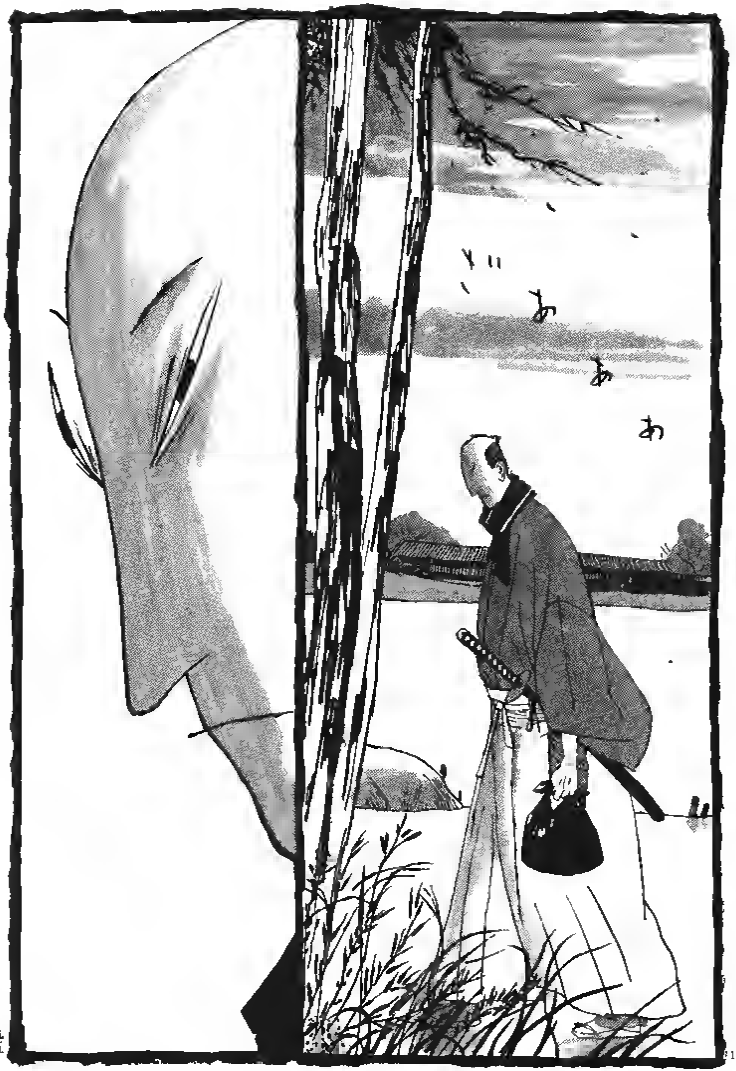
KAN!
AGHH!
YOSHI-BOU?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE IN TEACHER'S HOME?
WHAT'S THAT?
MAYBE HE WENT TO SEE PRIEST HOMA?
WHERE'S TEA-CHER?
JEEZ, YOU SCARED ME.
I BROUGHT IT OVER BECAUSE TEACHER'S BEEN LOOKING UNWELL THESE PAST FEW DAYS.
MANJU.


DON'T YOU DARE
AHHH
IT'S JUST BEST TO EAT IT BEFORE IT GOES BAD
WHICH IS WHY I'M CUPPING IT LIKE THIS IN MY HANDS.
BUT IT'LL DRY UP IF I JUST LEFT IT HERE FOR HIM...
SAME AS ALWAYS
HE WAS ON HIS WAY TO THE USUAL TUTORING.
TEACHER IS PERFECTLY FINE.
I THOUGHT YOU'D SAY THAT.
SO COME ON, LET'S EAT THE MANJU
SQUEAK
SQUEAK
NO!
COME ON, JUST A LITTLE BIT, PRETTY PLEASE!
BACK OFF YOSHI-BOU!


THE SPRINGTIME HAZE TUGS AT MY HEART
THE PASSING OF THE FOLDING FAN SURROUNDING ALL SIDES, BOTH YESTERDAY AND TODAY
THE SNOWY PLUM GATES, EVER SO FAINTLY, DYED RED BY THE MORNING SUN
HMPH, HE'S SO DAMN LOUD
THE NEW MAT WITH INKSTONE BLOTS,

HE PASSED AWAY
NOW WHERE MIGHT YOUR MASTER BE?
AH IF IT ISN'T THE HORSE OF THE KOBAYAGAWA HOUSE
I SHALL BE GOING TO THE HITACHI HOUSE
AND I AM BEING SOLD OFF
JUST WHAT HAPPENED?
HMM, THAT'S QUITE A WAYS FROM HERE

AHAHA
THEY HAD ALWAYS DISLIKED ME BUT AT LEAST THAT IDIOT ALONE HAD BEEN ON MY SIDE BEFORE
MOREOVER, THESE MEN HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO SELL ME OFF FOR A LONG TIME
THANKS TO MY FOOLISH MASTER'S EXTRAVAGANT SPENDING, OUR HOUSE HAS BECOME RATHER POOR
TAR
HMRH, WHAT A FILTHY TOWN THIS IS I SHALL LEAVE THIS PLACE MYSELF!
UWAHH
RUSTLE
STOMP


あ
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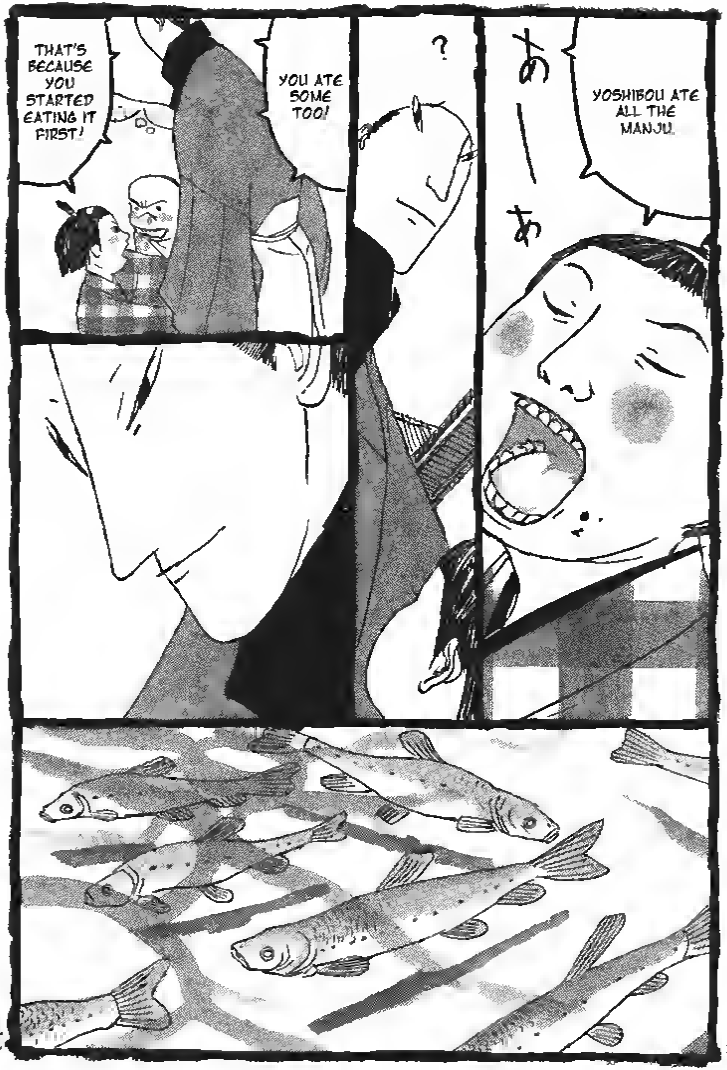
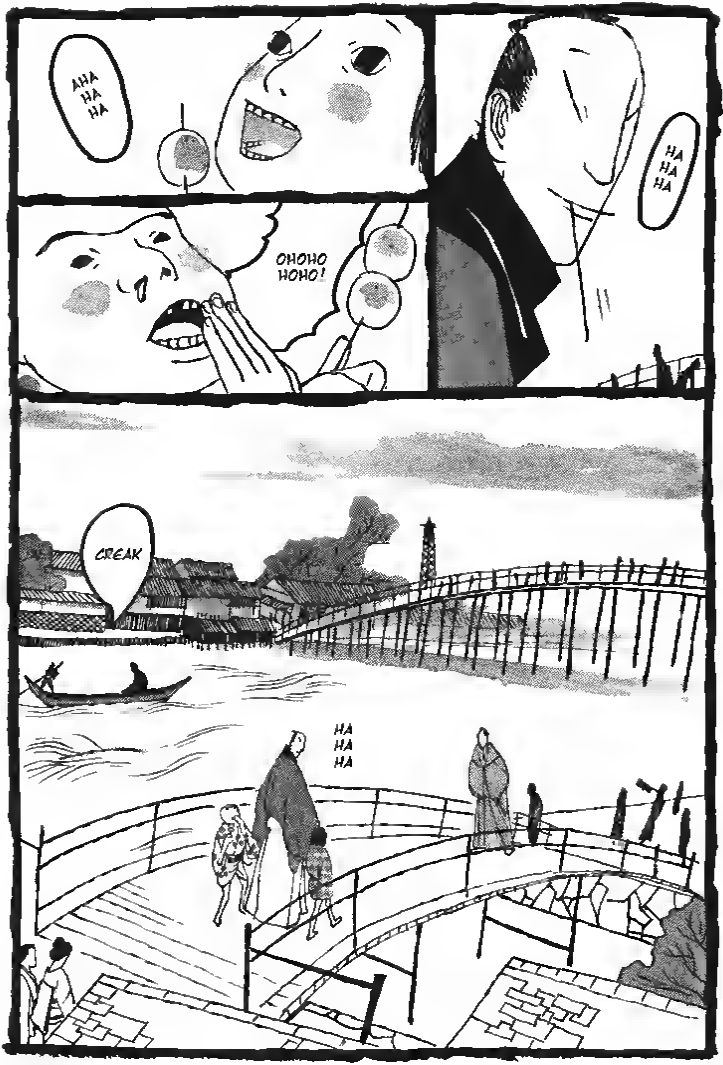
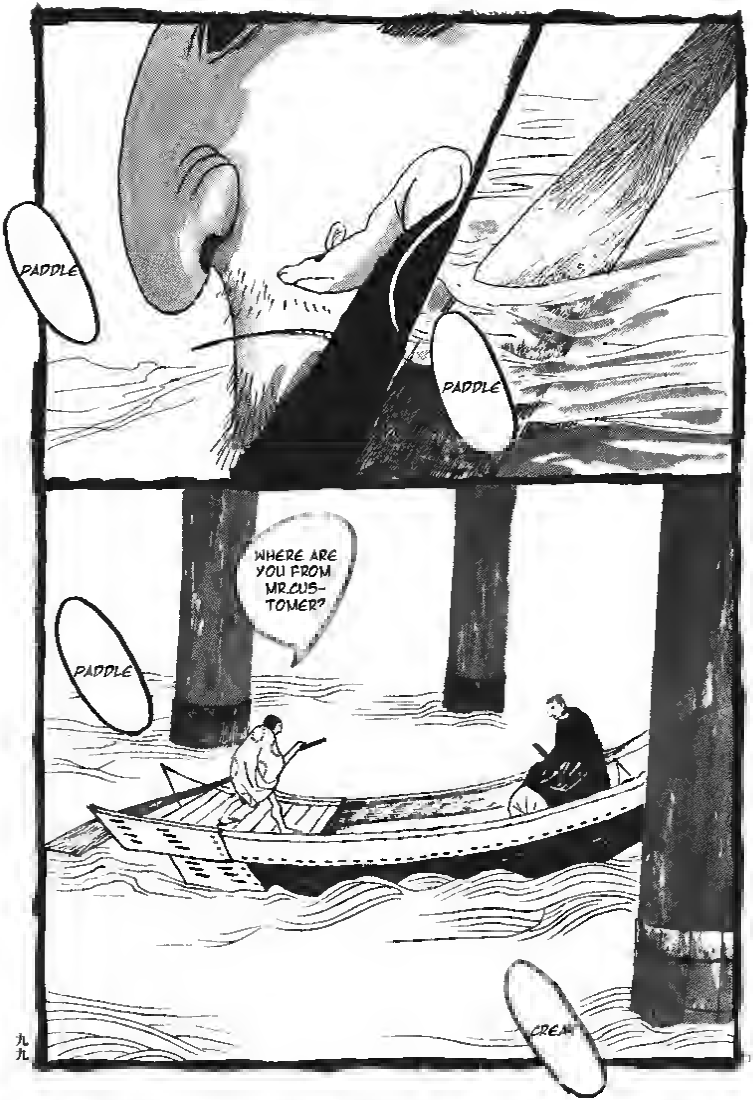
OHH, HI THERE, KAN. YOSHIBOU
HMM?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING ALL THE WAY OUT HERE?
I WAS WAITING FOR YOU

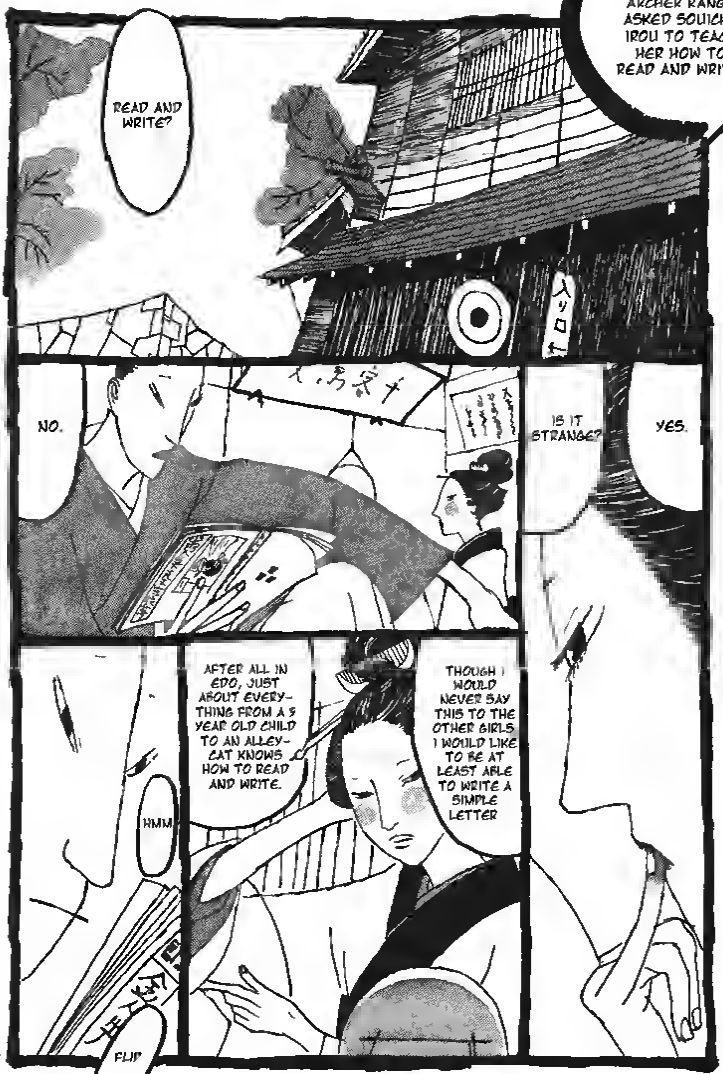

YOSHIBOU ATE ALL THE MANJU.
あーー
?
YOU ATE SOME TOO!
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU STARTED EATING IT FIRST!


AHA HA HA
HA HA HA
OHOHO HOHO!
CREAK
HA HA HA


PADDLE
PADDLE
WHERE ARE YOU FROM MR.CUSTOMER?
PADDLE
CREAK

TRANSLATED BY HOX

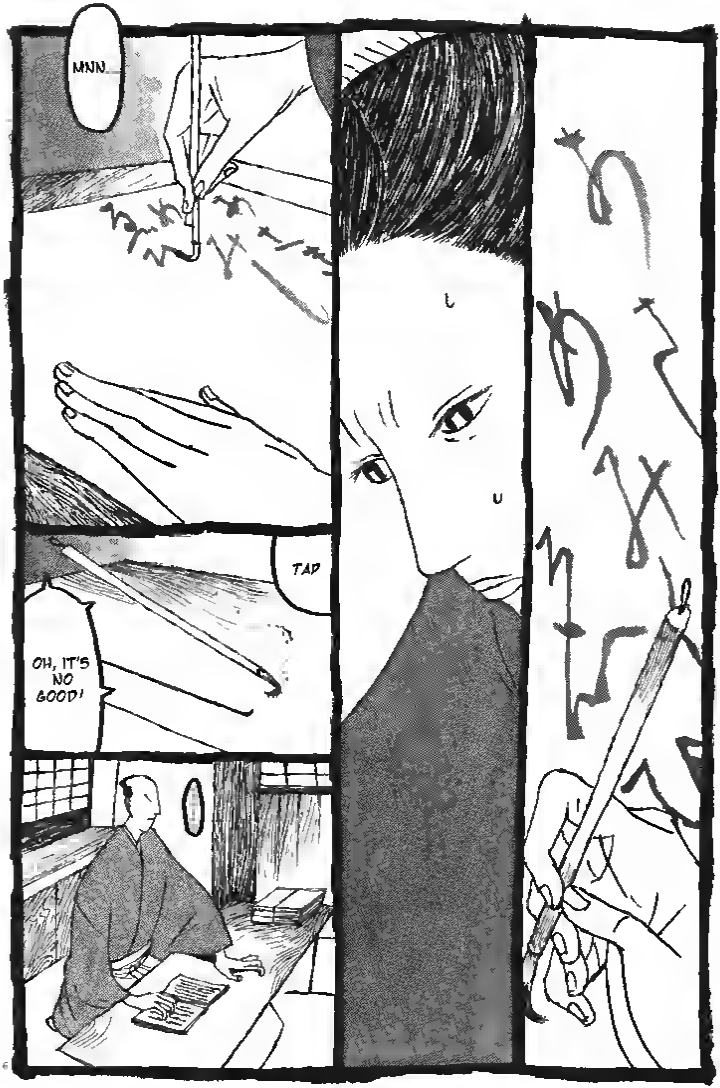
CHAPTER 16 SNOW AND INK

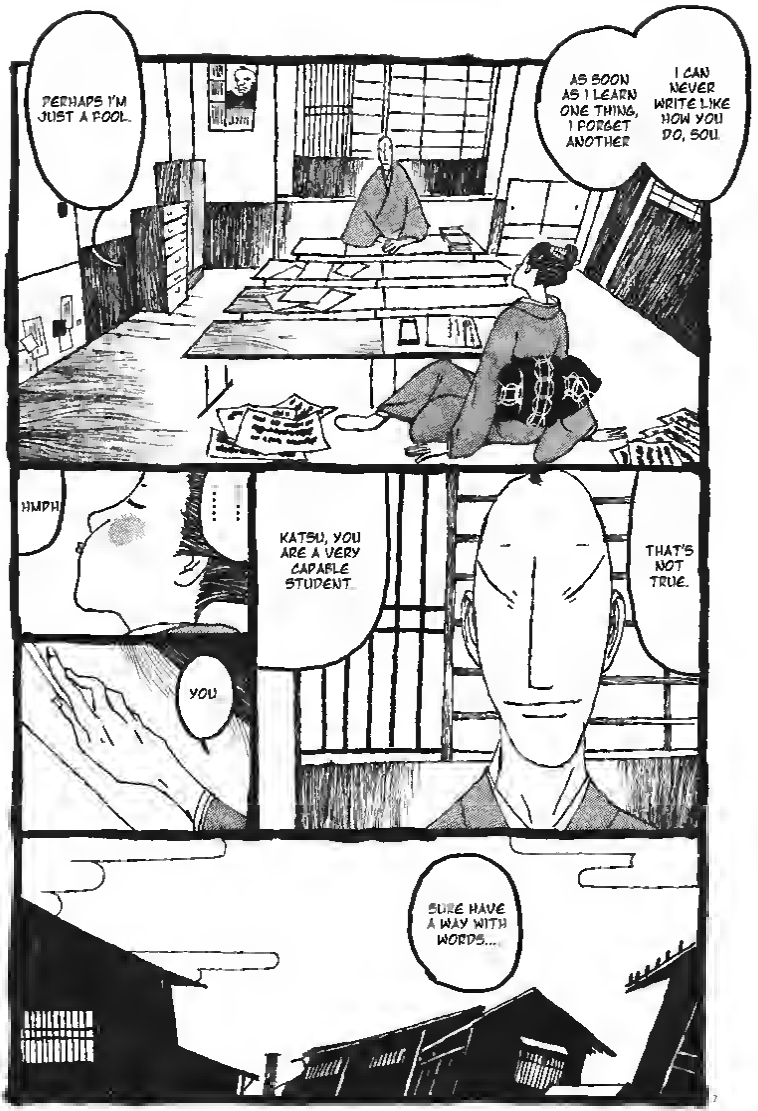

THE LADY HOSTESS OF THE ARCHER RANGE ASKED SOUICHIROU TO TEACH HER HOW TO READ AND WRITE
READ AND WRITE?
YES.
IS IT STRANGE?
NO.
THOUGH I WOULD NEVER SAY THIS TO THE OTHER GIRLS I WOULD LIKE TO BE AT LEAST ABLE TO WRITE A SIMPLE LETTER
AFTER ALL IN EDO, JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING FROM A 5 YEAR OLD CHILD TO AN ALLEY-CAT KNOWS HOW TO READ AND WRITE.
HMM
FLIP

HOW TO COUNT MONEY AND TREAT THE MALE GUESTS...
I WAS TAKEN HERE WHEN I WAS BUT JUST A YOUNG CHILD.. THE ONLY THINGS MY NEW CARETAKERS TAUGHT ME WERE..
I CAN FAINTLY RECALL A MEMORY WHERE A MAN WITH VERY YELLOW TEETH IS DRAGGING ME BY THE ARM...
AND A RIVER THAT SNAKED LEFT AND RIGHT, AS IF WEAVING ITS WAY THROUGH THE SNOW... SOMEHOW IT ALL FELT A LITTLE SCARY.

IT WAS ONLY AFTER I HAD BECOME AN ADULT WHEN I REALIZED THAT IT WAS THE TENRYU RIVER I HAD SEEN.
ALRIGHT, I SHALL TEACH YOU THEN
I SHALL SEE IF I CAN USE THE STUDY ROOM AFTER I'M DONE WITH THE USUAL TUTORING OF THE KIDS
STEP
THANK YOU, SOU
綾屋
綾屋

DASH
AH, GOOD DAY TO YOU AS WELL, KATSU. I'LL BE COMING WITH YOU TO THE STUDY ROOM.
OH, HELLO SIR AND LADY KURA
SLIDE SHUT
SOU, I'M HERE!!
ALRIGHT, COME IN.
HMPH, WHAT MANNERS...


MMM...
TAP
OH, IT'S NO GOOD!


PERHAPS I'M JUST A FOOL.
AS SOON AS I LEARN ONE THING, I FORGET ANOTHER
I CAN NEVER WRITE LIKE HOW YOU DO, SOU.
HMPH
.....
KATSU, YOU ARE A VERY CAPABLE STUDENT.
THAT'S NOT TRUE.
YOU
SURE HAVE A WAY WITH WORDS....

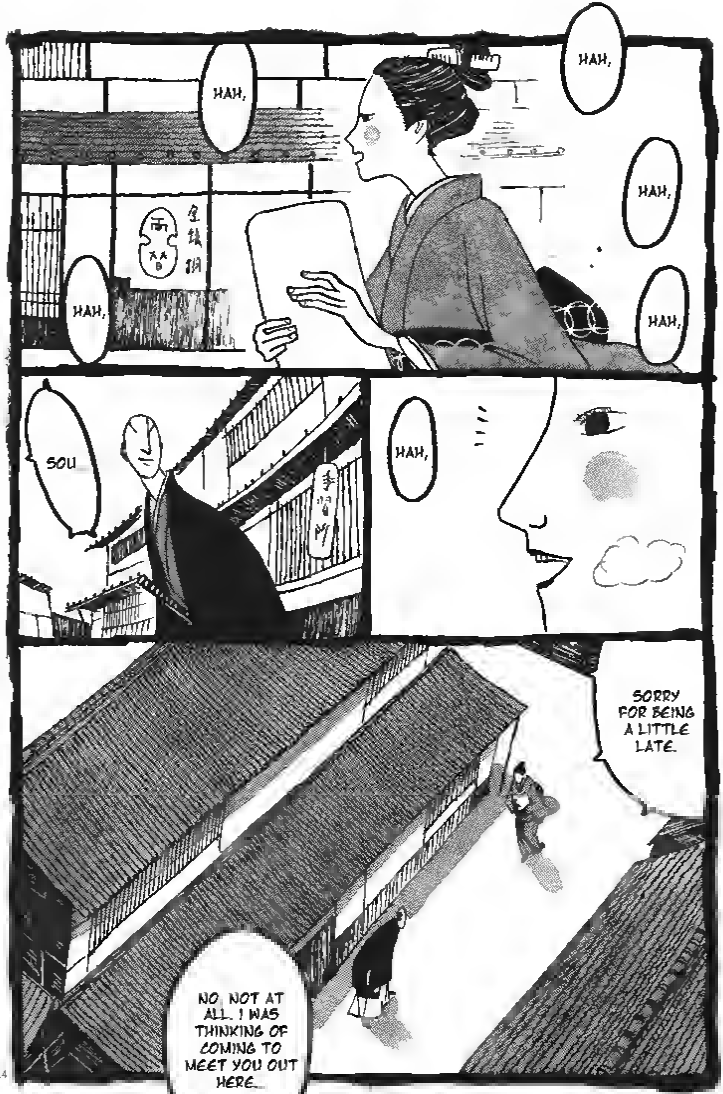
KATSU DO YOU KNOW OF THE LEGEND OF TENRYU RIVER?
SLIDE

YES THERE'S A LEGEND THAT SAYS A DRAGON WRITHING IN AGONY LEFT A TRAIL THAT LATER BECAME THE TENRYU RIVER.
GOOD
TEN-RYU?
DRIP
LONG AGO, THERE WAS GIANT DRAGON THAT LIVED IN LAKE SUWAKO...
BUT THIS GIRL ALREADY HAD A MAN WHO LOVED HER...
DECIDED TO OFFER A YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL GIRL TO THE DRAGON EVEN THE DRAGON HAD NEVER SEEN SUCH A BEAUTY BEFORE
THE VIL[illegible]RS AFTER WONDERING WHAT OFFERING TO MAKE TO THE DRAGON

HE WAS VERY CLEVER AND SKILLED WITH THE BOW AND ARROW
HE DREW HIS BOW AGAINST THE DRAGON,
AND THE ARROW PIERCED THE DRAGON'S HEFT EYE PER-FECTLY
BUT STILL,
HOW BRAVE THAT MAN IS
AND THUS, THE TWO WERE ABLE TO MARRY AND HAPPILY LIVE EVER AFTER, AS THE STORY GOES.

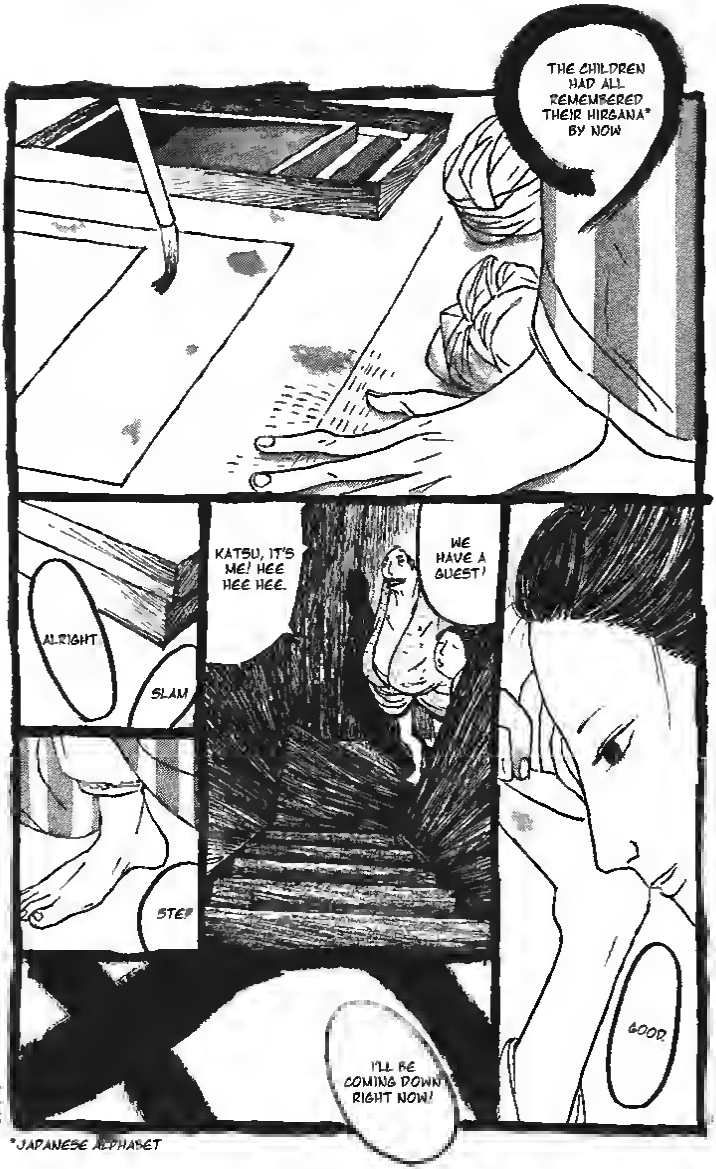
HOW PITIFUL THE DRAGON IS...

I'M AFRAID SHE'S NO GOOD.
NO GOOD?
YES. IT'S A MATTER OF HER SOCIAL STATUS.
SOCIAL STATUS?
WE CANNOT JUST ALLOW A GIRL FROM THE ARCHERY RANGE TO COME AS SHE WISHES TO THE STUDY ROOM.
THIS VERY STUDY ROOM THAT THE CHILDREN STUDY IN.
IF WORD GETS OUT, THE PARENTS WOULD SIMPLY STOP SENDING THEIR CHILDREN HERE.
I'M SURE YOU MUST UNDERSTAND SUCH AN OBVIOUS THING AS WELL.


HAH,
HAH,
HAH,
HAH,
HAH,
SOU
HAH,
SORRY FOR BEING A LITTLE LATE.
NO, NOT AT ALL. I WAS THINKING OF COMING TO MEET YOU OUT HERE...

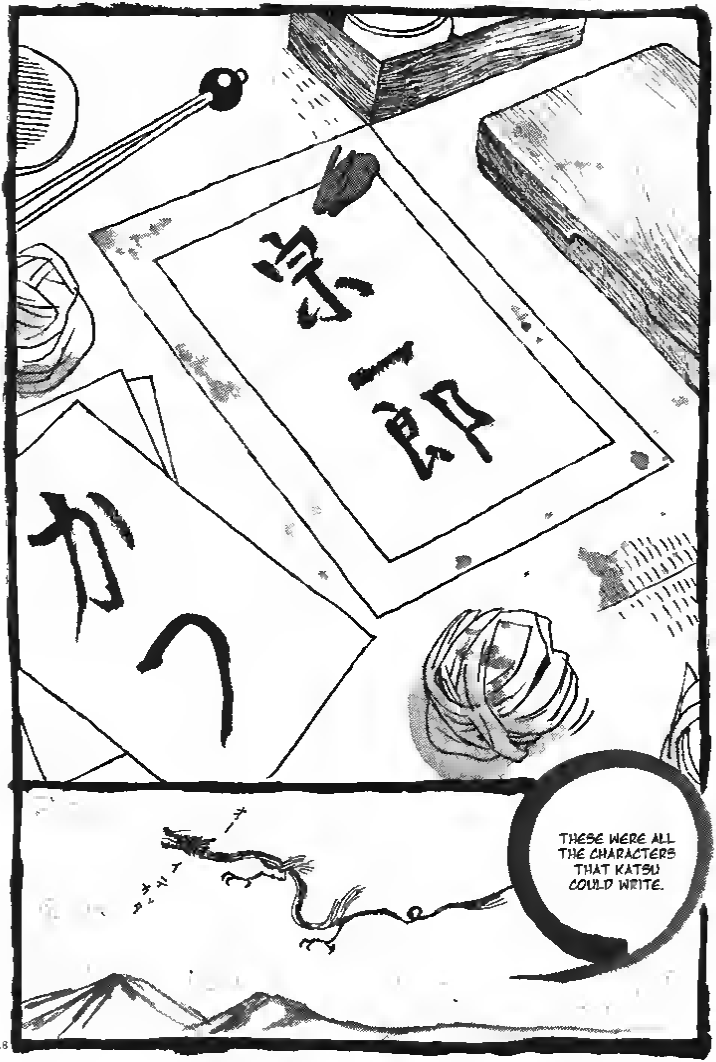
SO IT'S OVER AS OF TODAY, I SEE...
.....
HUH?
IT MUST BE THE FACT THAT I WOULD GIVE A BAD REPUTATION TO THIS PLACE IF I WERE TO COME HERE ANY MORE.
OUR SHOP HAS BEEN RATHER BUSY LATELY IT'S BECOME RATHER HARD TO GET SOME SPARE TIME
AND TO BE HONEST,
IT'S ALRIGHT, SOU. I'M ALREADY USED TO THESE THINGS.

THANK YOU, SOU.
IT WAS VERY FUN STUDYING WITH YOU.
AND SO THEIR PRIVATE LESSONS STOPPED AFTER JUST 10 DAYS...



*JAPANESE ALPHABET

THE TWO SHEETS HAVE THE NAMES, "SOUICHIROU" AND "KATSU" WRITTEN ON THEM.

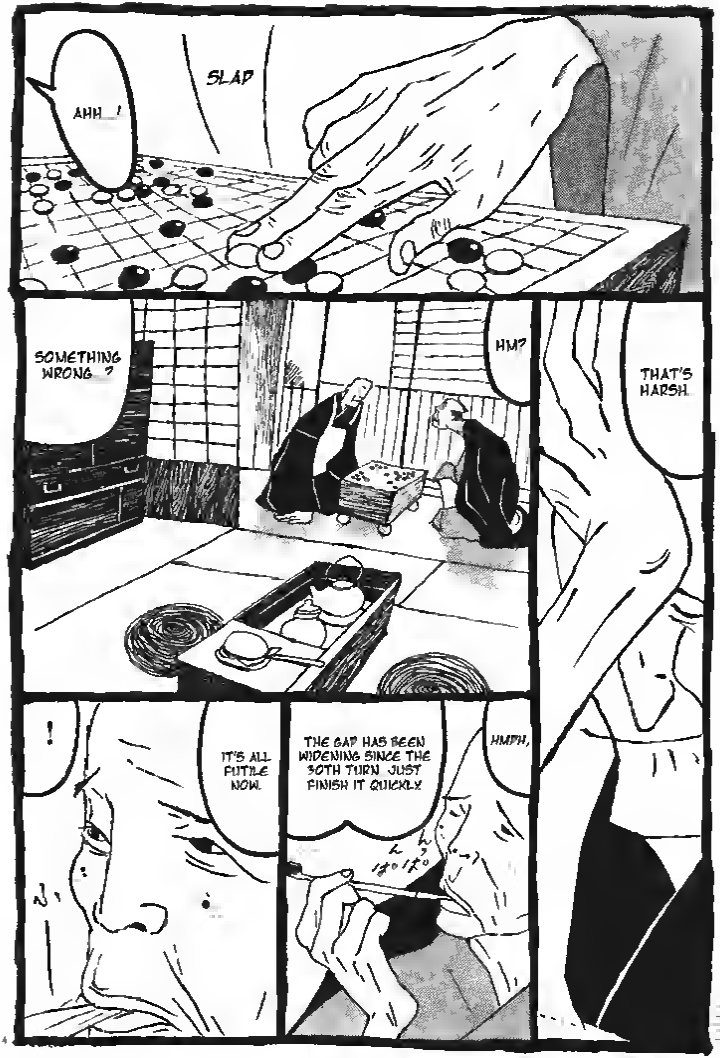


TRANSLATED BY HOX

I'M OUTTA HERE.
I DON'T THINK I CAN TAKE THE STENCH OF BLOOD IN THIS PLACE ANYMORE.
STAY IN GOOD HEALTH.

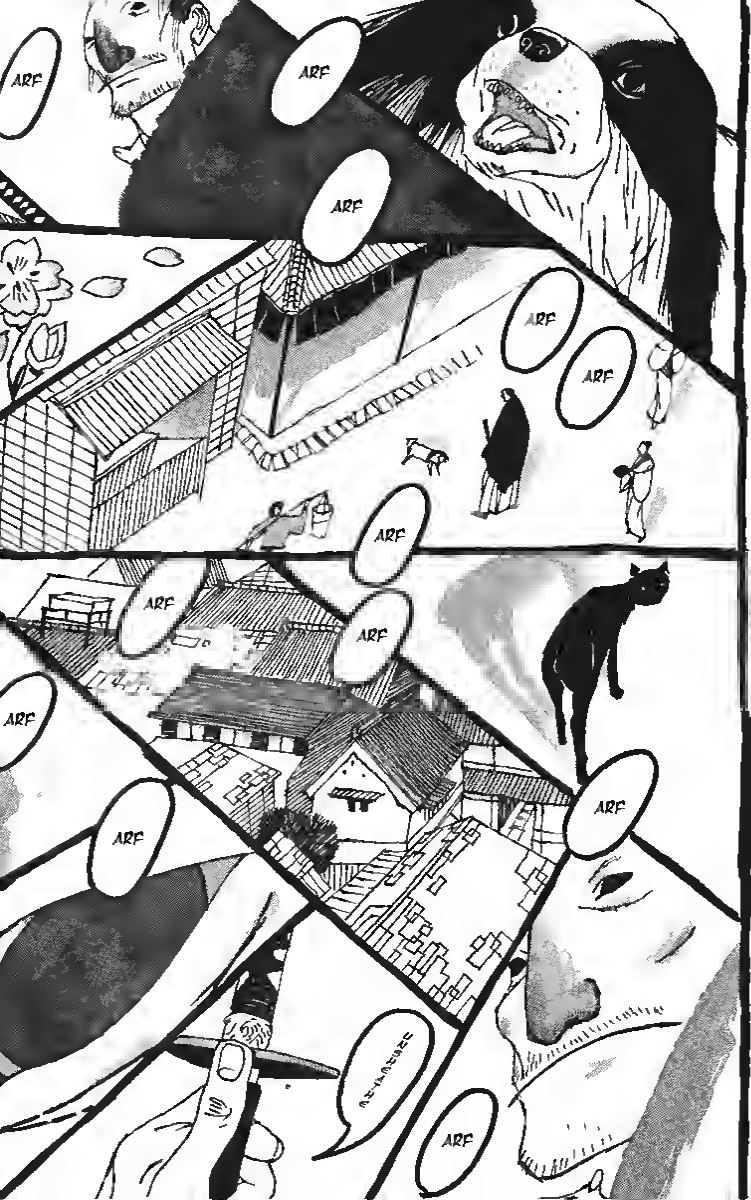
CHAPTER 17
NOXIOUS FUMES

ARF
ARF
ARF
ARF
SURUGACHOU 2 IN THE AFTERNNON
ARF
ARF
ARF
ARF


SLAP
AHH...!
THAT'S HARSH.
HM?
SOMETHING WRONG...?
HMPH.
THE GAP HAS BEEN WIDENING SINCE THE 30TH TURN. JUST FINISH IT QUICKLY.
IT'S ALL PUTTLE NOW.
!

AH, HELLO MR. LAND-LORD PRIEST HOSA.
AH, ARE YOU HEADING OUT?
KAN AND I WERE THINK-ING OF HEADING OUT TO GET SOME DANGO TO EAT WHILE THE SUN IS STILL OUT
COME ON, LET'S GO
ALRIGHT, TAKE CARE THEN.
WE'LL BE OFF THEN.
MNN

WHAT WAS THAT?
.....
YOU DON'T BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE CAN CHANGE AS TIME PASSES?
THAT MAN'S LOVE FOR SWEETS SURE IS PERPETUAL.
NO...
NEVER MIND.
HE'S ON EVERYONE'S MINDS THESE DAYS...
HAHA, SENOU... THAT SENOU...
JUST HURRY UP AND MAKE YOUR MOVE.
THERE'S SOMETHING CHARMING ABOUT THAT FOX.

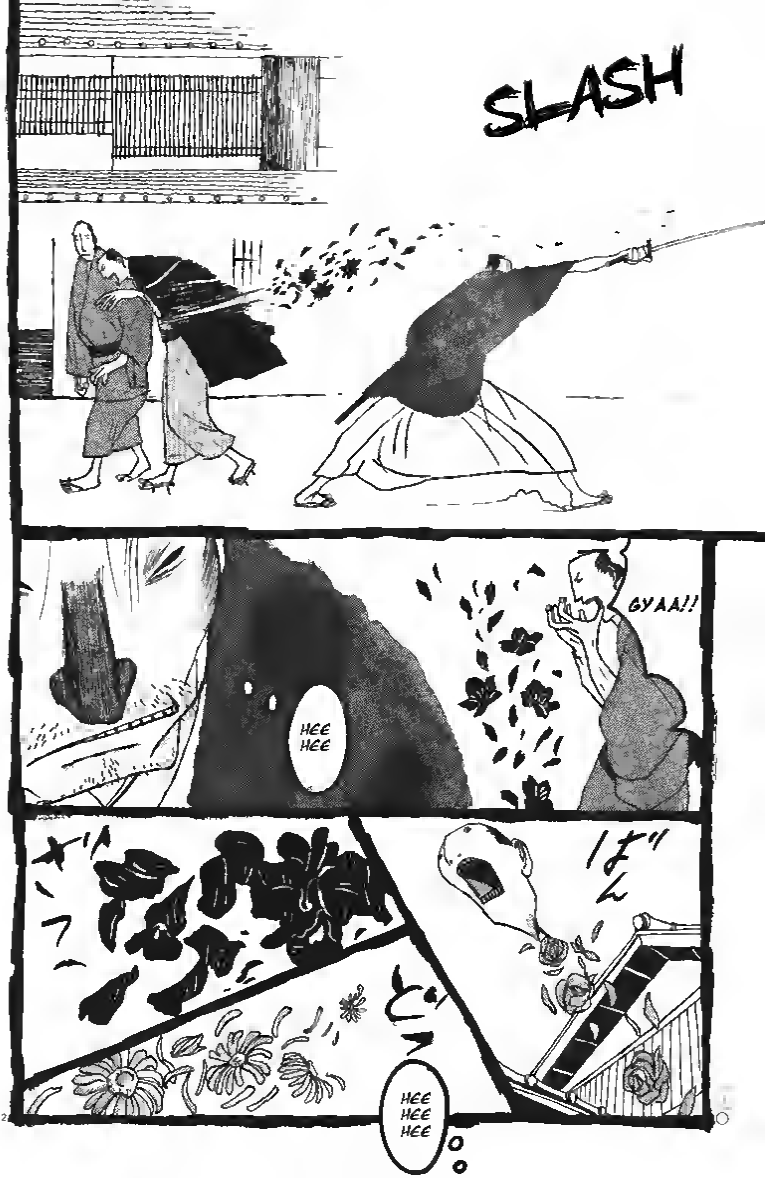

ARF
ARF
ARF
ARF
ARF
ARF
ARF
ARF
ARF
ARF
ARF
ARF
ARF

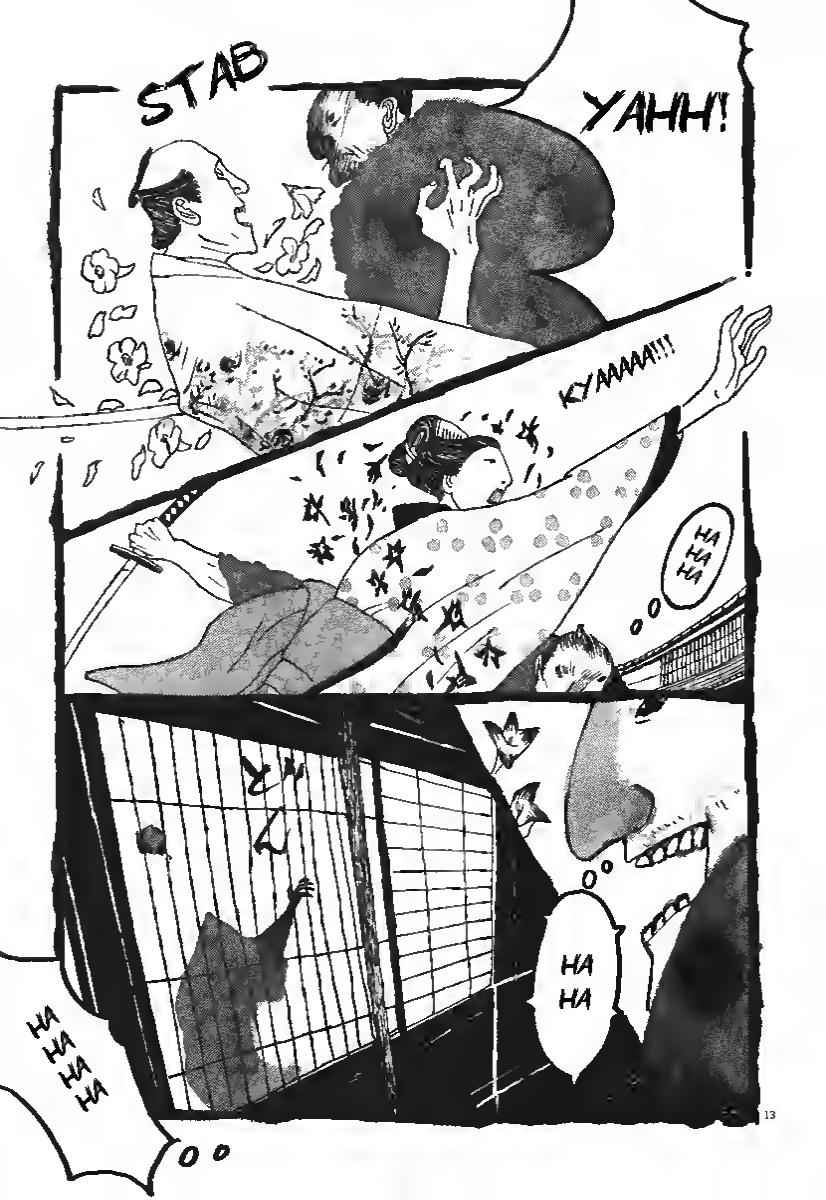
SLASH

W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?
HEH HEH
EEE HEE HEE
HNN..
GASP
STAB
THAT'S MY D..

AGHHH!
KYAA AAA!!
ず
SWING
SLASH
GAHH!
AGHH!

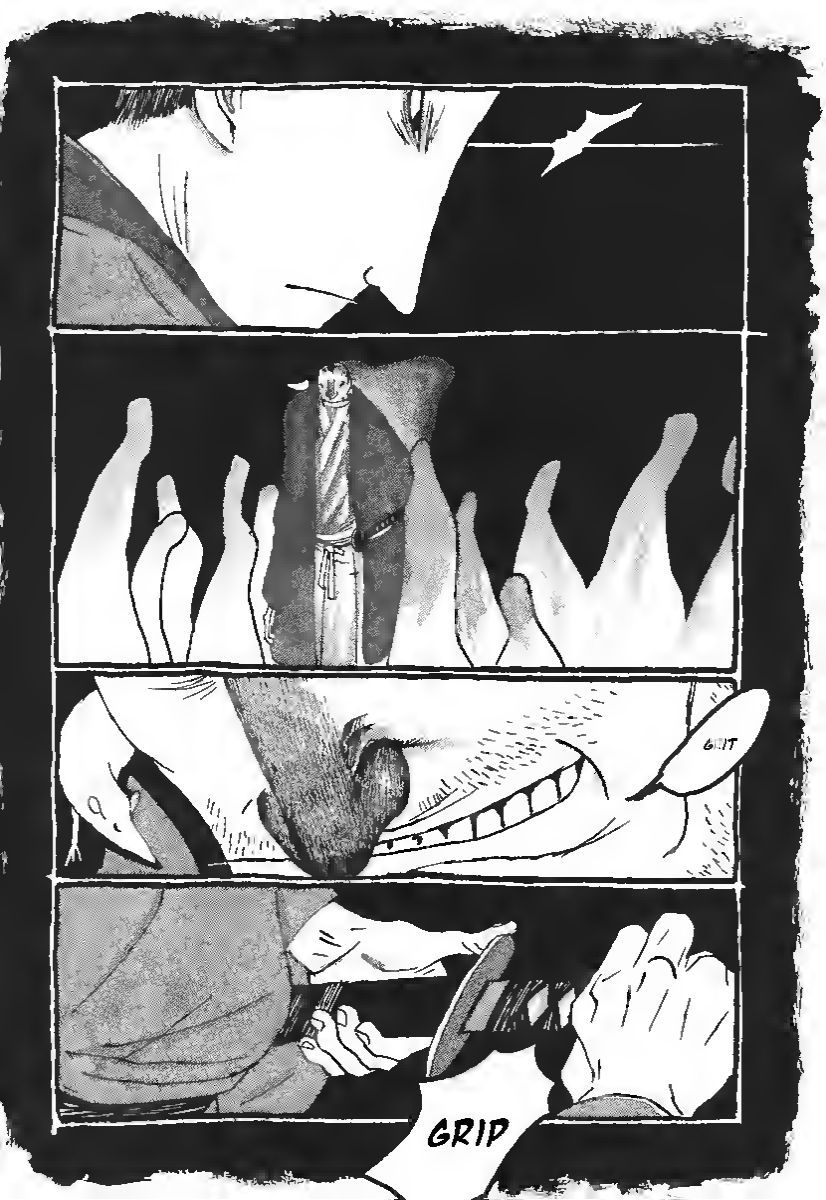
KYAA!
AGHH!
ARF
HEY! STOP BARKING AT OTHER PEOPLE!
ARF
ARF
HAHA HAHA
...UNK
HA HA
GYAHAHA! AND SO I SAID I AIN'T EATING THAT!!


SLASH
GYAA!!
HEE HEE
HEE HEE HEE


STAB
YAHH!
KYAAAAA!!!
HA HA HA
HA HA
HA HA HA HA

HA
HA
HA
HA
HA!
!?
HA
HA

EVER SINCE THE TSUJIGIRI KILLINGS, I CANNOT SEEM TO REST EASY
FOR SOME REASON, THE TOWN SEEMS WILD
PERHAPS IT'S BECAUSE OF THE FLOWERS...


GRIT
GRIP

HEE
HEE

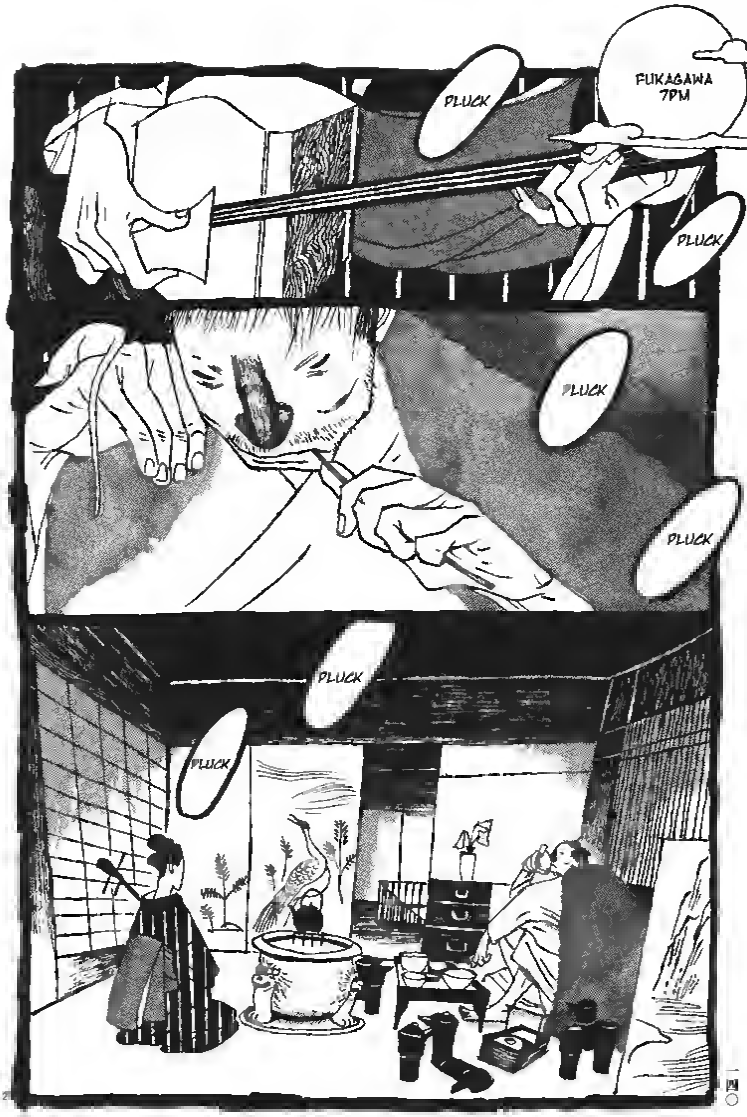
KIKUCHI SHINNOSUKE
MAKE SURE TO REMEMBER THE NAME, SENOU.
I SHALL CUT YOU DOWN ONE DAY.

I HATE CHERRY BLOSSOMS.
SOU?
WHAT IS IT, SOU?
?
HEE HEE.
THE SHADOW OF THE CAT RUNNING ALONG THE KANDA RIVER GROWS LONGER IN THE AFTERNOON

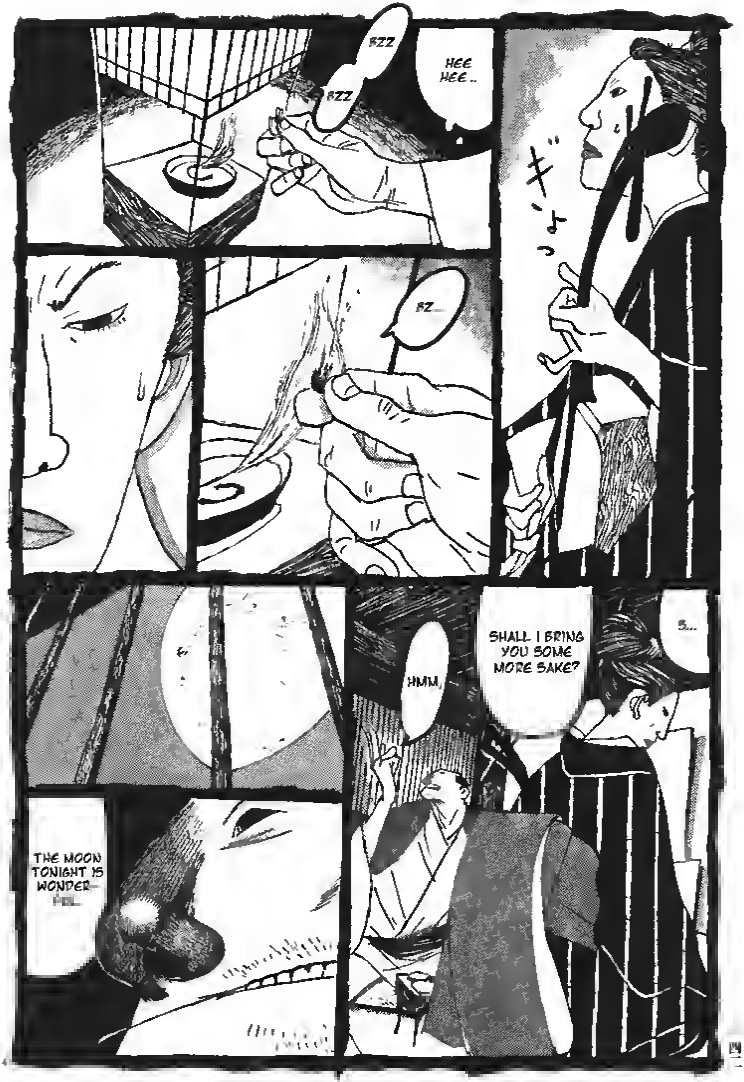
TRANSLATED BY HOX

MURDER UNDER THE MOONLIGHT

CHAPTER 18

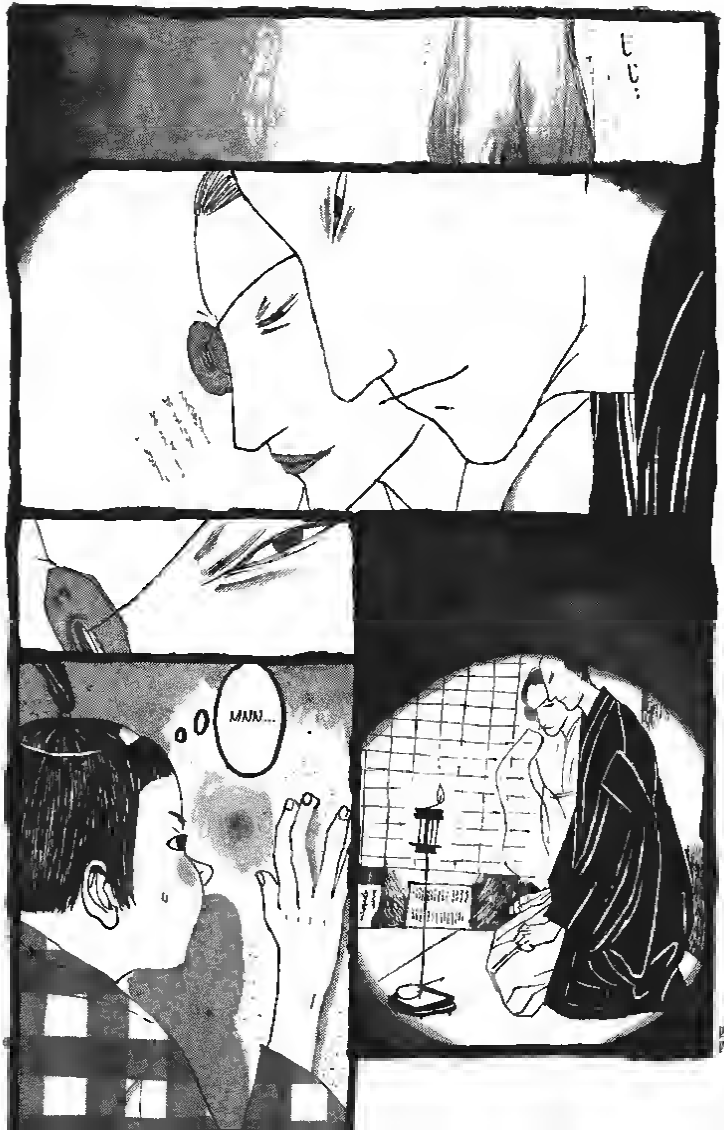

FUKAGAWA
7PM
PLUCK
PLUCK
PLUCK
PLUCK
PLUCK
PLUCK

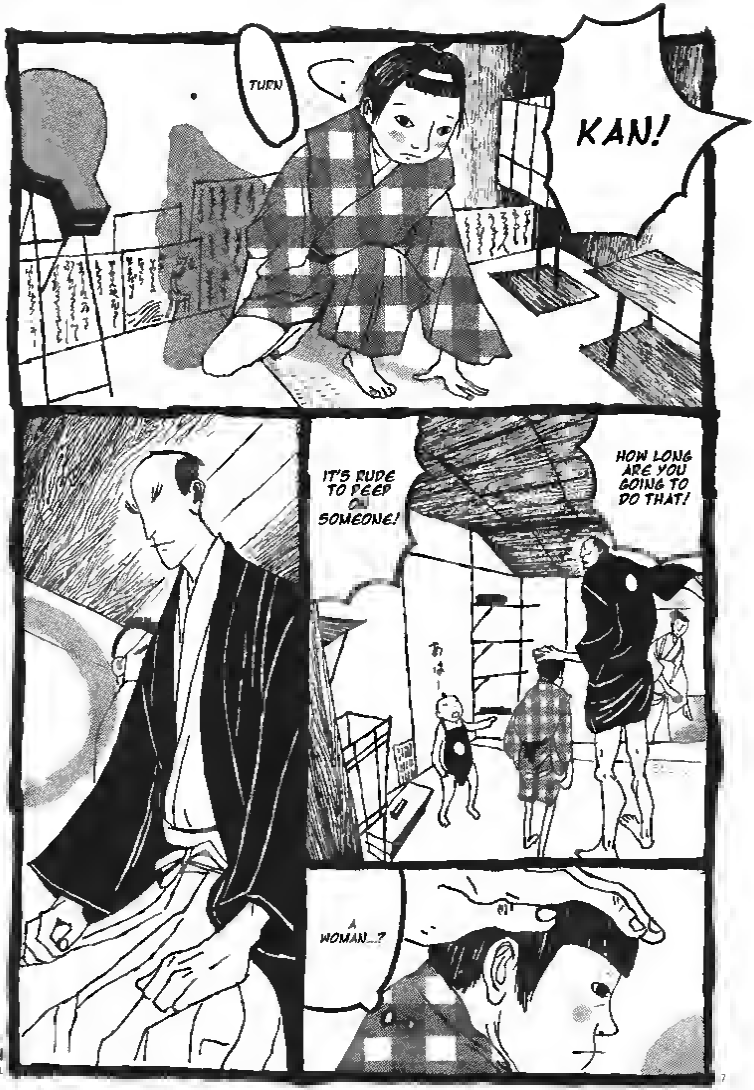
BZZ
BZZ
FLICK
FLICK
FLICK


FZZ
FZZ
HEE HEE...
ギ...よっ
FZ...
SHALL I BRING YOU SOME MORE SAKE?
S...
HMM
THE MOON TONIGHT IS WONDER-

*MYTHICAL JAPANESE CREATURE

TO CUT THAT STALKER DOWN WOULD BE QUITE FUN, RIGHT, MESHI? HEE HEE...
YES. IN FACT, TOMORROW WILL BE A FULL MOON
COMPARED TO SENOU, HE'S NOTHING BUT SOME OLD KAPPA'S* FART
EEE HEE HEE
I AIN'T AFRAID OF HIM AT ALL.
?

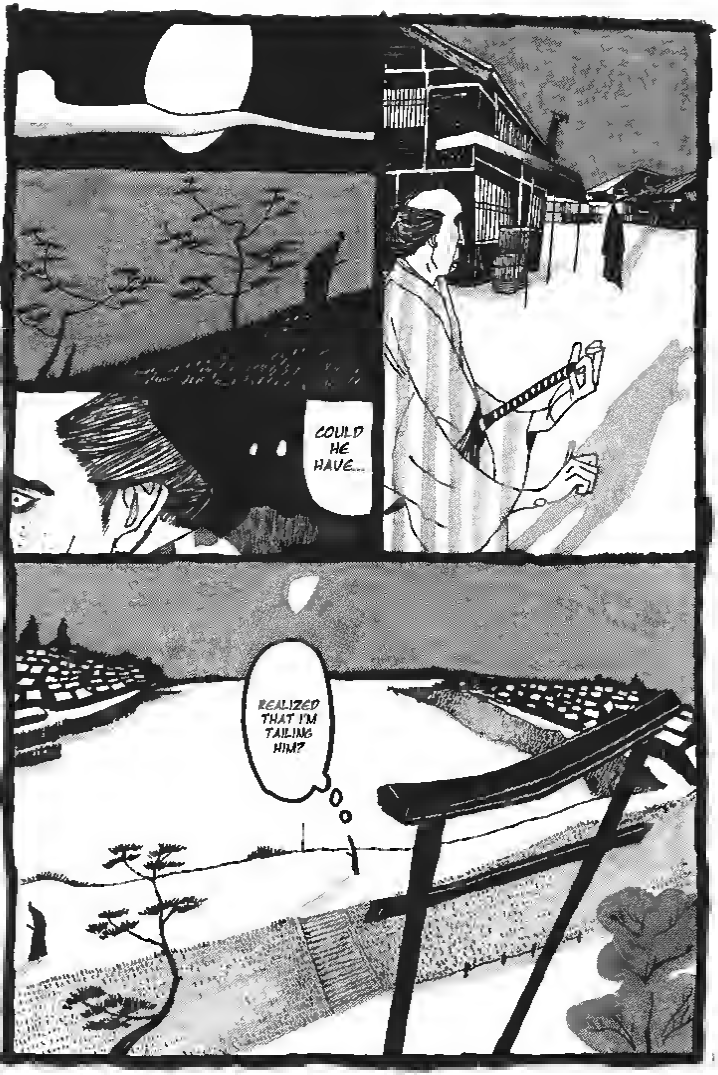

じじ…
MMM…


TURN
KAN!
IT'S RUDE TO PEEP ON SOMEONE!
HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO DO THAT!
あぁ…
A WOMAN...?

ガシッ
STAB!

ズン

HEY THERE MISTER HOW ABOUT STOPPING BY AT OUR SHOP?
.....
BASH!
AGH!
.....
WHAT DOES THAT BASTARD THINK HE'S DOING!?
SOMEBODY BRING SOME WATER OVER HERE!
HOW TERRIBLE! SHE WON'T STOP BLEEDING!


COULD HE HAVE...
REALIZED THAT I'M TAILING HIM?

STEP
I LOVE IT WHEN THE MOON IS BIG AND ROUND.
YOU'RE ALWAYS GOING AROUND WITH YOUR MOUTH HANGING OPEN AND LOOKING UP AT THE SKY LIKE AN IDIOT...
I HAVE NO REAL REASON TO FIGHT YOU, KIKUCHI.
...
STEP

IF I KILL YOU, MY MASTER WILL REPRI-MAND ME.
THEN HOW ABOUT YOU JUST DIE HERE?
HEE HEE
SCREECH
HMPH...
SIGH

HAHH!
AHH!

GUH!
GUSH
ぼっ

だら
BLOW

CHIRP CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP CHIRP

THE NAME OF THIS MAN WAS KIKUCHI SHINNOSUKE
WEAK WEAK WEAK... WEAK LIKE A WOMAN, HEE HEE HEE...
A CONTRACT KILLER WHO KILLED WITHOUT FAIL
I'M MUCH MUCH MUCH STRONGER
THE NEXT MORNING IT WAS CONCLUDED THAT THE DEAD BODY FOUND WAS THE RESULT OF A DUEL BETWEEN 2 RONIN SAMURAI.

TRANSLATED BY HOX

CHAPTER 19
RUMBLING OF THE DISTANT THUNDER

ICHIGAYA USHIGOME NEIGHBOURHOODS ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF A RESTAURANT, ALL THE FEMALE MAIDS HAD BEEN SENT DOWN, AND A GROUP OF SHADY MEN WERE HAVING A MEETING
IT'S ALREADY BEEEN ONE MONTH!
RAIN IS COMING
DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE ADVANCE PAYMENT WE GAVE YOU!
ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING!? AND STOP EATING, KIKUCHI!
JUST HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO KILL ONE FOX!?

IF YOU DON'T LIKE HOW I DO THINGS, THEN WHY DON'T YOU KILL HIM YOURSELVES?
HMPH,
MUNCH
MUNCH
MUNCH
HAVE YOU TURNED TAIL, KIKUCHI!?
W-WHAT!?
BURP
ANY OF YOU FELLOWS WANT TO SHOW ME HOW IT'S DONE?

YOU SAID THAT HE WAS A FOX...
SIP
A REAL MONSTER, THAT ONE IS. HEE HEE HEE
IS IT RAINING OUTSIDE, KIKUCHI?
THAT'S WHAT MY OLD SCAR IS TELLING ME
TAP

NO, NOT YET...
HE'S STRONG...
BUT PERHAPS IT WILL SOON...
HM?
AH, I THINK I JUST SAW LIGHTNING.

KIKUCHI, THERE WAS A MAN BY THE NAME OF OOTAKI SHOU-NOSHIN...
JUST ONE MORE SAKE DOME ONEGAISHIMASU
THE STORM WILL MAKE THE ROADS MUDDY SOON. DON'T YOU THINK IT'D BE BEST IF YOU WENT HOME NOW?
HE WAS A MASTER OF THE ITOU STYLE OF SWORDSMANSHIP AND HE TRAINED WITH ME AS WELL BACK IN MY YOUNGER DAYS.
KNOWING HIS SKILLS, I ASKED HIM TO KEEP A WATCH ON YOU A MONTH AGO BUT
DISAPPEARED SINCE THREE DAYS AGO.
GRIT
GRIT

ARE YOU SURE IT WASN'T YOUR DOING!? WELL!?
IS THAT THE TRUTH, KIKUCHI?
GAHA HAHA!
WELL, I DON'T KNOW HIM!
?
HMM?
WHA?
WHAT IS IT?
HM?
HUH?
MESHI?

MESHI'S NOT HERE!
LOOK,
THERE'S A HUGE RAT RUNNING AROUND HERE.
.....
EEK, HOW DISGUSTING...

HURRY UP AND KILL IT!
SQUEAL!!
IT'S OVER THERE!
GRAB
HUH?
BASH!

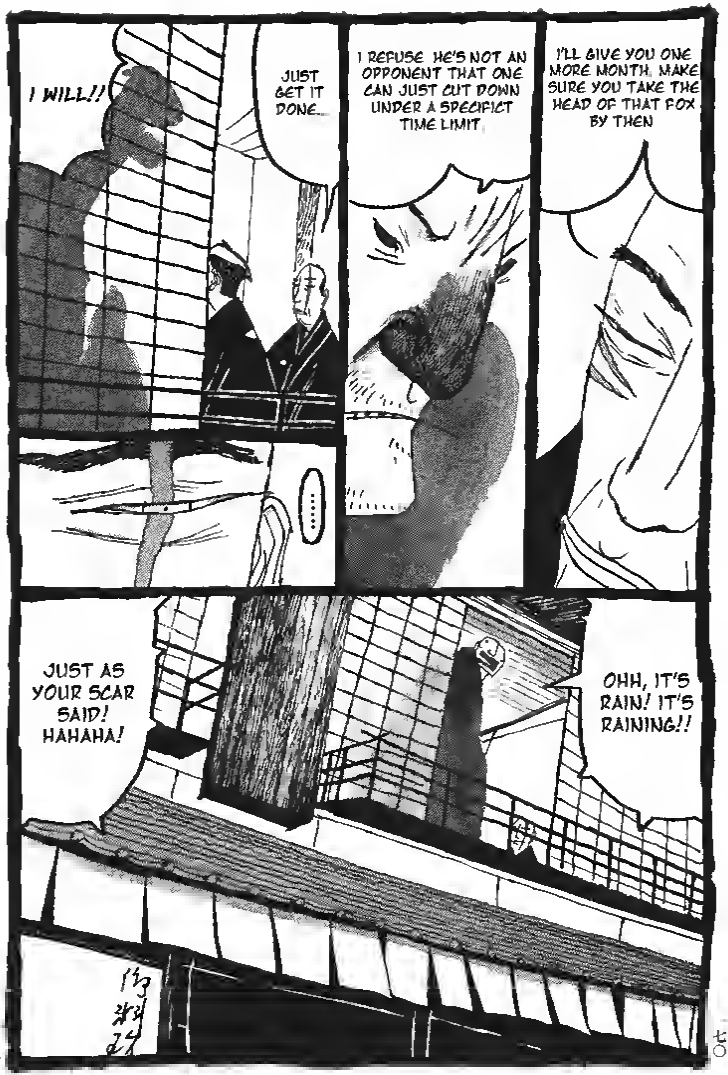
*MESHI CAN ALSO MEAN FOOD, WHICH EXPLAINS WHY HE'S CONFUSED IN THIS PANEL.

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY I NAMED HIM MESHI!?
THAT'S WHAT I THINK
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THING IN THIS WORLD IS FOOD (MESHI)
NO, NOT REALLY
ADK
THAT'S WHY HE'S MESHI!
GAHA HAHA!!
I GAVE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL NAME TO HIM IN THIS WORLD!

HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
DAMN IT HE DIDN'T NEED TO HIT ME...
ARE YOU FINE, SIR?

JI LIU ASKED,
MASTER, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK ABOUT HOW TO SERVE THE GODS AND THE SPIRITS
CONFUCIUS REPLIED. YOU CANNOT EVEN SERVE YOUR FELLOW MAN WELL.
HOW CAN YOU EVEN THINK OF SERVING THE GODS AND THE SPIRITS?

*THE PASSAGE SENOU IS READING IS FROM VERSE 11 ANALECTS OF CONFUCIUS 11

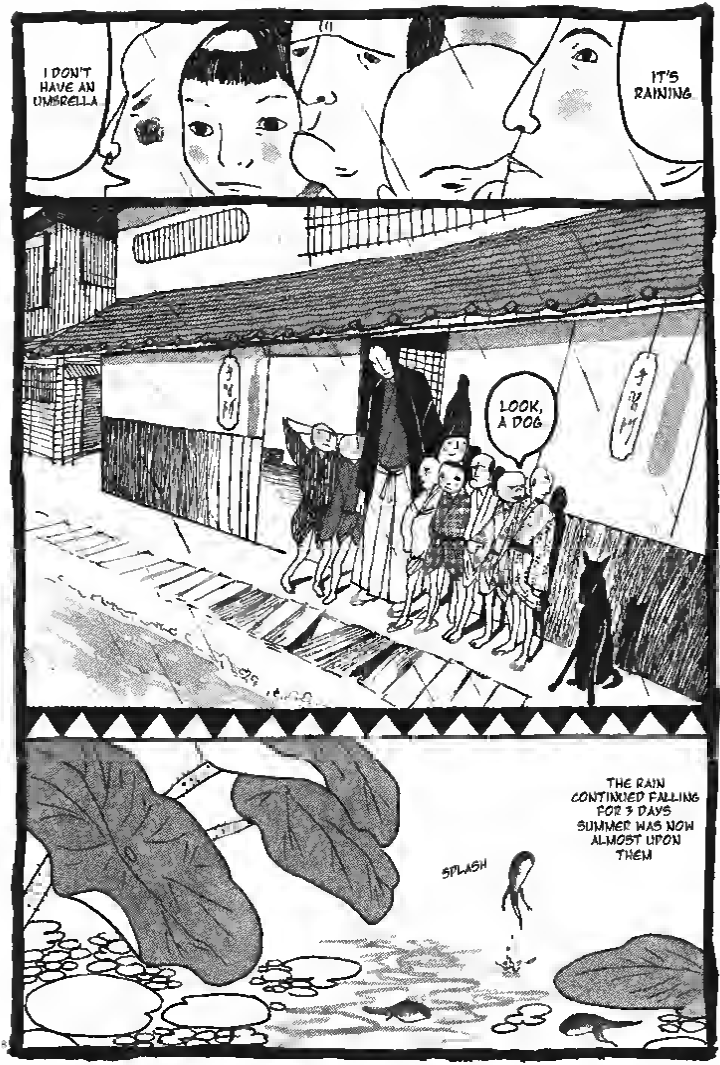

I WILL!!
JUST GET IT DONE.
I REFUSE. HE'S NOT AN OPPONENT THAT ONE CAN JUST CUT DOWN UNDER A SPECIFIC TIME LIMIT.
I'LL GIVE YOU ONE MORE MONTH. MAKE SURE YOU TAKE THE HEAD OF THAT FOX BY THEN
JUST AS YOUR SCAR SAID! HAHAHA!
OHH, IT'S RAIN! IT'S RAINING!!

AGH!
MOVE IT!!
I'LL TAKE MY LEAVE NOW.
SLIDE
HE'S NOTHING BUT AN IDIOT.
BUT HIS SKILLS ARE SOMETHING TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED
HE MAY BE SKILLED BUT THERE'S NO SENSE IN TALKING TO HIM
HMPH. AND YOU CALL YOURSELF A SAMURAI?

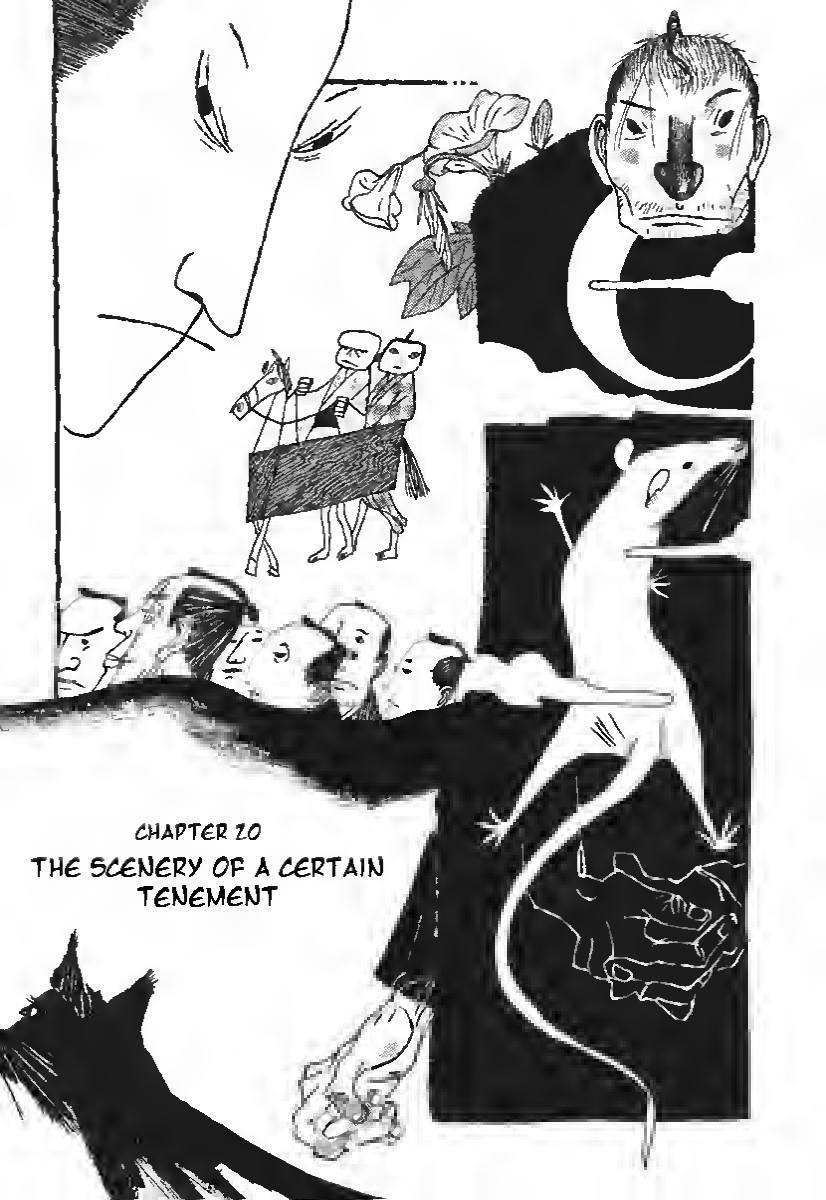
*THE LITERAL TITLE USED HERE IS "KAROU", THE TOP-RANKING SAMURAI IN SERVICE TO A DAIMYO(FEUDAL LORD)

JUST PAY HIM THE REMAINING 50 RYO (GOLD PIECE) AND LET HIM DO WHATEVER HE WANTS WITH IT
BUT SIR*...
YOU HEARD ME. I SHALL NOT SAY IT A SECOND TIME...
SAKE
ONLY THAT IDIOT ALONE CAN CUT DOWN THAT FOX.
DASH
DASH
DASH

ARGGGHHH!


I DON'T HAVE AN UMBRELLA
IT'S RAINING
LOOK, A DOG
THE RAIN CONTINUED FALLING FOR 3 DAYS SUMMER WAS NOW ALMOST UPON THEM
SPLASH

TRANSLATED BY HOX



CHAPTER 20

THE SCENERY OF A CERTAIN TENEMENT

KANKICHI AND YOSHIBOU WERE NOWHERE TO BE FOUND EVEN AFTER THE 7 O'CLOCK BELL CAME AND WENT, AND SO THE NAGAYA TENEMENTS WERE IN STATE OF GREAT COMMOTION.
WELL THEY SAID THEY WERE ONLY GOING TO GO OUT LOOKING FOR A CAT!
WHAT!? THEY WEREN'T WEARING THEIR TAGS*! DAMN IT WOMAN!
RITSU TOME ALL THIS ARGUING ISN'T GOING TO GET US ANYWHERE.
I NEVER THOUGHT THEY WOULD TAKE SETSU ALONG NOR RUN OFF TO SOMEPLACE FAR!!
WE'LL ALL HELP YOU LOOK FOR THE CHIL-DREN SO
THAT'S RIGHT.

*KNOWN AS "FUDA", IT HAD BASIC INFORMATION SUCH AS NAME AND ADDRESS WRITTEN IN CASE CHILDREN GOT LOST

AND THE REST OF YOU, GO CHECK THE STRAY BLOCKS AND STREETS!
OK!
AS FOR ME, I'LL GET TSUNEGOROU AND CHECK OUT THE STATION!
GOT IT!
ALRIGHT, THEN YOU TWO GO TO SHIBA-KUCHI'S BULLETIN BOARD TO SEE IF THERE HAVE BEEN ANY REPORTS!
ACCORDING TO RITSU, KAN HAD TAKEN HIS SISTER SETSU ALONG, AND WITH YOSHIBOU, THEY HAD GONE OFF LOOKING FOR THE BLACK CAT THAT HAD DISAPPEARED A FEW DAYS AGO.
WE'LL MEET BACK HERE AFTER ONE HOUR!
BDM

COUGH
MEANWHILE...
IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE THAT WILL BE ANYTIME SOON...
I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO RETURN BACK HOME ONCE THIS MATTER ABOUT THE FOX HAD BEEN SETTLED BUT...
IN ANY CASE I SHALL LEAVE THE REST OF THE MATTER IN HIS HANDS.
WELL...
TAP
YES...

AS IN?
BUT SIR... THERE HAVE BEEN SOME HINDRANCES ABOUT THAT...
HA HA HA
EEE HEE HEE
THE MAN WE HIRED IS MERELY PLAYING WITH HIS RAT AND NOT DOING ANYTHING AT ALL...
WERE YOU PEOPLE TAILING HIM AS WELL...? I WOULD ADVISE AGAINST THAT LEST YOU WISH TO WIND UP DEAD..
WELL...
BUT...
IT IS BEST TO JUST LEAVE THE FOX FOR HIM TO DEAL WITH..
HE IS MUCH MORE SKILLED WITH THE SWORD THAN YOU MAY THINK..
BUT SIR...

SIR?
THAT'S ENOUGH FOR NOW!
CLAP
CLAP
LET US ENJOY THIS NIGHT HAHAHA!!
BRING IN THE WOMEN.
WAHA HAHA HAHA!
6PM

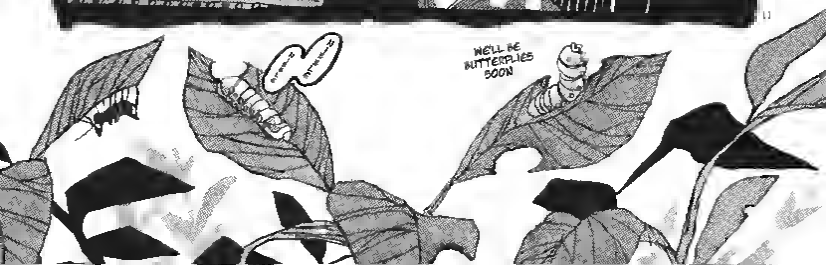
CHIRP
CHIRP
HA HA HA HA
CHIRP

MNN...
NO. I WAS THE ONE WHO WANTED TO GO LOOKING FOR THE BLACK CAT
JUST WHERE DID THAT BLACK CAT GO ANYWAYS...
SORRY, KAN.
ALL BECAUSE I SPRAINED MY ANKLE...
LOOK, KAN.
AH!
FINALLY WENT TO SLEEP AFTER ALL THAT CRYING
THERE'S SO MANY STARS.

KAN AND YOSHIBOU ARE MISSING?
YES.
THEY WENT OUT LOOKING FOR A CAT. AND THEY TOOK SETSU ALONG AS WELL.
WE WERE ALL WONDERING IF THEY COULD HAVE BEEN WITH YOU.
I'M AFRAID NOT.
DAMN.
MEOW

HEY!
LET'S SEE HERE. DO YOU PERHAPS KNOW THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE CHILDREN, LITTLE CAT?
MEOW
I BELIEVE IT IS SAYING THAT THE CHILDREN HAVE GONE ALONG THE KANDA RIVER
HMM, YES, YES
HMM
MEOW
MEOW
I COULD UNDERSTAND THE WORDS OF CATS WHEN I WAS YOUNG
MEOW
AS IF, YOU IDIOT!
REALLY!?
OK!
HMPH. WELL, NO POINT IN STANDING AROUND HERE. LET'S CHECK THE STREETS AGAIN!

HA HA
THAT ACT WAS NOTHING BUT A SAD JOKE.
CAN'T YOU SEE TOMEKICHI IS DEAD SERIOUS!?
WHERE'RE YOU GOING?
TO THE PLACE THAT THE CAT SAID.
HMPH, ST*ANGE AS ALWAYS.


WE'LL BE BUTTERFLIES SOON

OHH...
IN TIMES LIKE THESE, IT'S BETTER TO JUST STAY PUT.
HMPH.
DID'YA KNOW THAT?
WHEN YOUR [illegible] STARTS TO RUN, YOUR TUMMY WILL START TO GRUMBLE.
ズ
IN RETURN, I'LL TEACH YOU SOME-THING TOO.
YOU'RE SO SMART, KAN.
AH!
HO HO HO
SNIFF

WHAT BRINGS YOU OUT ALONE, HUH...?
OH, WEIRD! MY CUTE LITTLE CHILD HAS DISAPPEARED! WHERE COULD SHE HAVE GONE...?
WELL DONE, HOLDING OUT IN THE DARK NIGHT.
HO HO HO
K-K-KAN... LOOK, IT'S A G-G-GHO...
YOU'RE JUST SEEING THINGS
GHOSTS DON'T EXIST
NOW LET'S GO BACK HOME

YOU HAD EVERYONE WORRIED SICK.

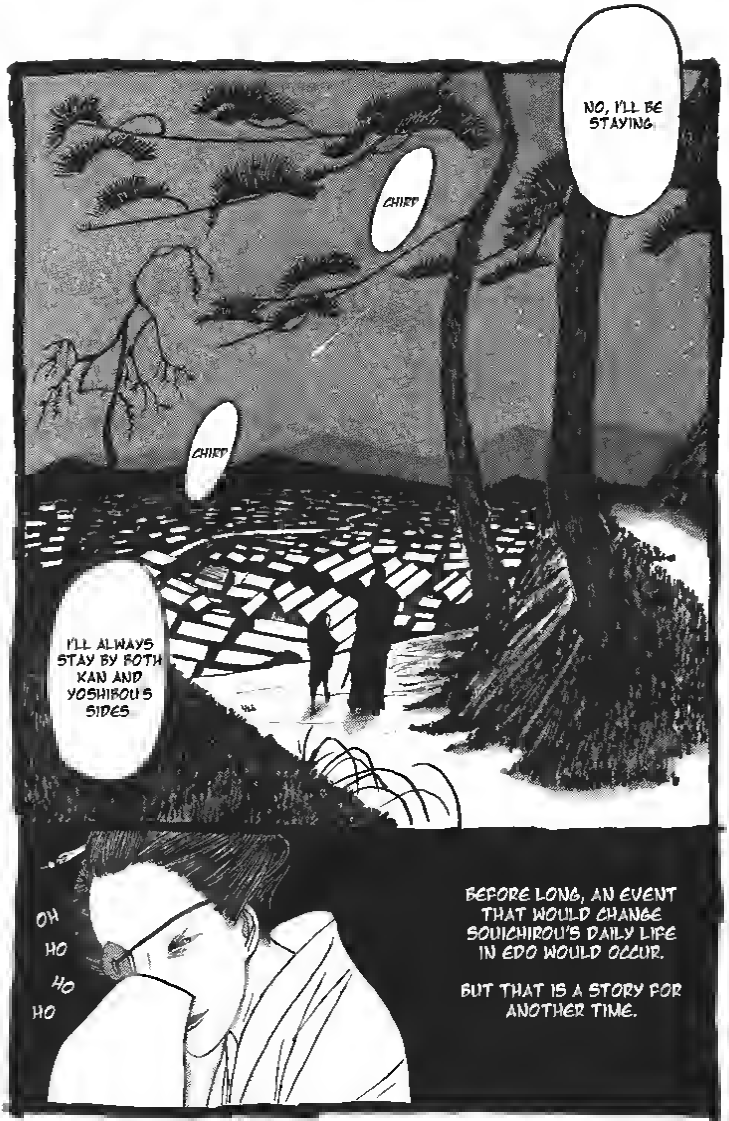
PLUCK
HA HA HA HA!
PLUCK
PLUCK
PLUCK
PLUCK
PLUCK
PLUCK

CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
HA
HA
HA
HA

HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA

MN...
DID YOU SAY SOMETHING, KAN?
I WAS JUST WONDERING IF THAT BLACK CAT LOST ITS WAY BACK HOME LIKE US.
HMM...
HE MIGHT HAVE LEFT ON HIS OWN WILL.
YOU MEAN HE LEFT MOMMY AND HIS KIDS?
MN?
I GUESS.

WHAT ABOUT YOU, SOU?
...
CHIFU
CHIFU
IS SOU GOING TO LEAVE US AND GO SOME-WHERE TOO?


NO, I'LL BE STAYING.
CHIRP
CHIRP
I'LL ALWAYS STAY BY FOTH KAN AND YOSHIROU'S SIDES.
OH HO HO HO
BEFORE LONG, AN EVENT THAT WOULD CHANGE SOUICHIROU'S DAILY LIFE IN EDO WOULD OCCUR.
BUT THAT IS A STORY FOR ANOTHER TIME.

TRANSLATED BY HOX

第三集へつづく……

待つべし、待つべし。

BIG SPIRITS COMICS SPECIAL

竹光侍 ㊦

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